

TV TALK IN A LONDON PUNJABI PEER CULTURE

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by

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APPENDIX TO CHAPTER ONE

SOUTHALL

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1981 CENSUS

WARD AND BOROUGH PROFILES

Basic facts on the Ward and Borough populations
and their characteristics

A population profile has been prepared for each Ward and for the Borough based on information from the 1981 Census of Population.

These profiles cover:-

- Residents** — number, age, place of birth and comparison with numbers in 1971
- Work** — full time/part time workers, employment characteristics of single parents, unemployed residents and social/economic group.
- Households** — comparison, size, pensioner households, tenure, type and size of accommodation and amenities.

Each ward profile contains a summary of how it compares with the Borough - for example, whether it has a significantly higher proportion of children or the elderly. The borough profile compares in a similar way figures for Ealing and Greater London.

More detailed information is available from the Town Planning Division, Technical Services Group, 24 Uxbridge Road, Ealing W5 2BP, Telephone 579 2424 extension 2555/

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[on sale 22/24 Uxbridge Rd. £1.00
ok 85]

1981 Census - Borough Profile

Basic facts on the borough population and its characteristics

LONDON BOROUGH OF EALING



Residents

Total Residents 278677 100 %

(All % in this section are of this figure except those marked * or Δ)

Age of Residents

0-4	17772	7
5-15	39971	14
16-24	42736	15
25-44	78770	28
45-64	60419	22
Over 65	39009	14

Residents Country of Birth

United Kingdom	200010	72
Total New Commonwealth & Pakistan	47312	17
Eire	12418	4
Rest of Europe	9839	4
Rest of World	7325	3

All residents in households where head of household was born in NC or Pakistan 69755 25 Δ

Residents born in UK and living in a household headed by someone born in NC or Pakistan, aged 0-15 19020 86*
aged 16-29 3835 19*

(Δ % total residents in private households)
(* % residents in private households headed by someone born in NCWP by age groups shown)

Comparison with 1971

All residents 1971	300816
All residents 1981	278677
% difference 1971-1981	-7.1

Work

Workforce

All residents aged 16 + 220934

All economically active 145087 100 %
of which those self employed 10848 7

Full Time/Part Time Workers

	Full Time	%	Part Time	%
All employees	105511	100	16277	100
Women employees	39268	37	14594	90

Single Parents with Children Aged 0-15

Not in employment	229	10 Δ
Working full time	746	32 Δ
Working part time	348	15 Δ

(Δ % of total single parents with children aged 0-15)

Unemployed Residents

Total seeking work 10961 which is 8% of all econ. active

Males seeking work 7194 which is 8% of male econ. active

Females seeking work 3767 which is 6% of female econ. active

Total not in employment aged		
16-19	1640	17
20-24	2271	11
25-49	6018	8
50-64	2376	7

% of the econ. active in each age group

Socio-Economic Group (10% sample)

	Econ. active	%	Unemployed	%
Managerial/Professional	23820	14	810	0.5
Other non-manual	52000	30	2210	1
Skilled manual	29570	17	2290	1
Semi-skilled	25150	15	1570	1
Unskilled	8020	5	640	0.4
Others	7301	4	5180	3

% of total economically active or retired

These Information Notes are produced by the Town Planning Division of the Technical Services Group, for each ward in Ealing. Borough totals are also available in this format. More detailed information is available in the Census Digest (November 1982) and from the Town Planning Division, 24 Uxbridge Road, Ealing W5 2BP, Telephone 579 2424 extension 2555. Nov 1983

1981 Census - Ward Profile

Basic facts on the ward population and its characteristics

DORMERS WELLS WARD



Residents

Total Residents 13527 100 %

(All % in this section are of this figure except those marked * or ▲)

Age of Residents

Age Group	Count	%
0-4	1100	8
5-15	2138	16
16-24	1999	15
25-44	3400	25
45-64	2839	21
Over 65	2051	15

Residents Country of Birth

Country of Birth	Count	%
United Kingdom	9538	70
Total New Commonwealth & Pakistan	3227	24
Eire	409	3
Rest of Europe	155	1
Rest of World	198	2

All residents in households where head of household was born in NC or Pakistan 4760 39▲

Residents born in UK and living in a household headed by someone born in NC or Pakistan,

Age Group	Count	%
aged 0-15	1507	32★
aged 16-29	178	4★

(▲% total residents in private households)
(★% residents in private households headed by someone born in NCWP by age groups shown)

Comparison with 1971

Year	Count	% difference 1971-1981
All residents 1971	13197	
All residents 1981	13527	
% difference 1971-1981		2.5

Work

Workforce

Category	Count	%
All residents aged 16 +	10289	
All economically active	6093	100
of which those self employed	394	6

Full Time/Part Time Workers

Category	Full Time	%	Part Time	%
All employees	4434	100	699	100
Women employees	1673	38	645	92

Single Parents with Children Aged 0-15

Category	Count	%
Not in employment	24	12 ▲
Working full time	66	32 ▲
Working part time	24	12 ▲

(▲% of total single parents with children aged 0-15)

Unemployed Residents

Total seeking work 640 which is 10% of all econ. active

Males seeking work 428 which is 11% of male econ. active

Females seeking work 212 which is 8% of female econ. active

Age Group	Count	%
Total not in employment aged 16-19	106	22
20-24	143	16
25-49	414	13
50-64	175	12

% of the econ. active in each age group

Socio-Economic Group (10% sample)

Socio-Economic Group	Econ. active %	Unemployed %
Managerial/Professional	730 9	30 0.4
Other non-manual	1910 24	40 0.5
Skilled manual	1290 16	150 2
Semi-skilled	1500 19	40 0.5
Unskilled	430 5	90 1
Others	820 10	550 7

% of total economically active or retired

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1981 Census - Ward Profile

Basic facts on the ward population and its characteristics

GLEBE WARD



Residents

Total Residents 14250 100 %

All % in this section are of this figure except those marked * or ▲

Age of Residents

Age Group	Count	%
0-4	1472	10
5-15	2754	19
16-24	2518	18
25-44	3898	28
45-64	2451	17
Over 65	1157	8

Residents Country of Birth

Country of Birth	Count	%
United Kingdom	7038	49
Total New Commonwealth & Pakistan	6773	48
Eire	238	2
Rest of Europe	69	0.5
Rest of World	131	1

All residents in households where head of household was born in NC or Pakistan 10110 71.4 %

Residents born in UK and living in a household headed by someone born in NC or Pakistan.

Age Group	Count	%
aged 0-15	3030	30*
aged 16-29	298	3*

(▲ % total residents in private households)
(* % residents in private households headed by someone born in NCWP by age groups shown)

Comparison with 1971

Year	Count	% difference 1971-1981
All residents 1971	13902	
All residents 1981	14250	
% difference 1971-1981		2.5

Work

Workforce

All residents aged 16 + 10024 100 %

All economically active 6742 100 %

of which those self employed 347 5 %

Full Time/Part Time Workers

	Full Time	%	Part Time	%
All employees	5206	100	520	100
Women employees	1881	36	465	89

Single Parents with Children Aged 0-15

Category	Count	%
Not in employment	6	8 ▲
Working full time	25	32 ▲
Working part time	10	13 ▲

(▲ % of total single parents with children aged 0-15)

Unemployed Residents

Total seeking work 1476 which is 21% of all econ. active

Males seeking work 436 which is 10% of male econ. active

Females seeking work 302 which is 11% of female econ. active

Total not in employment aged

Age Group	Count	%
16-19	134	24
20-24	167	15
25-49	380	10
50-64	141	11

% of the econ. active in each age group

Socio-Economic Group (10% sample)

	Econ. active	%	Unemployed	%
Managerial/ Professional	480	6	30	0.4
Other non-manual	1210	16	20	0.3
Skilled manual	1670	22	140	2
Semi-skilled	2120	28	150	2
Unskilled	660	9	10	0.1
Others	560	7	420	6

% of total economically active or retired

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Households

Total Private Households	3830	% 100
(all % in this section are of this figure except those marked * or ▲)		
Household Composition		
Lone parent household	78	2
Households with 3 or more dependent children	752	20
Household Size		
1 person	528	14
2 persons	854	22
3-5 persons	1722	45
6 + persons	727	19
Pensioner Households		
Households with 1 or more pensioners	1023	27
Households composed entirely of pensioners	548	14
Households of 1 person aged 75 +	122	3
Household Tenure		
Owner occupied	2662	70
Council or housing association rented	600	16
Privately rented unfurnished	325	8
Privately rented furnished	224	6

Type of Household Space		%
Purpose-built flats	342	9 ▲
Houses/separate entrance	2856	75 *
Converted self contained flats	83	2 *
Other flats not self contained	41	1 *
(* % of total resident household spaces)		
Household Accommodation		
Total household spaces	4096	100
Unoccupied	1	0.1 ▲
Vacant	133	3 ▲
(▲ % of total household spaces all occupancy)		
Size of Accommodation		
1 room	71	2
2 rooms	170	5
3-4 rooms	1163	31
5-6 rooms	2306	50
7 + rooms	121	3
Selected Household Characteristics		
Exclusive use of inside bath & V.C.	3331	87
Inside bath and/or W.C. shared	173	2
Neither bath nor W.C. inside	142	2
1-1.5 persons per room	637	17
Over 1.5 persons per room	283	5
Households with no car	1597	42
Households with 2 or more cars	426	21

Compared with the Borough

Compared with Ealing as a whole, Glebe ward has a higher proportion of:-

Residents aged 0-4, 5-15 and 16-24
 Residents born in the NC or Pakistan ✓
 Residents in households where head of household was born in New Commonwealth or Pakistan
 Both men and women seeking work
 Unemployed residents in each age group
 Skilled, semi-skilled, unskilled manual and other economically active residents
 Households with 3 or more dependent children
 3-5 and 6 + person households
 Owner occupied households
 Houses/separate entrance
 Households of 5-6 rooms
 Households with neither bath nor W.C. inside
 Households with 1-1.5 and over 1.5 persons per room

1981 Census - Ward Profile

Basic facts on the ward population and its characteristics

MOUNT PLEASANT WARD



Residents

Total Residents 13314 100 %

(All % in this section are of this figure except those marked * or Δ)

Age of Residents

Age Group	Number	%
0-4	1037	8
5-15	2540	19
16-24	2316	17
25-44	3649	27
45-64	2501	19
Over 65	1271	10

Residents Country of Birth

Country of Birth	Number	%
United Kingdom	7391	56
Total New Commonwealth & Pakistan	5329	40
Ireland	303	2
Rest of Europe	124	1
Rest of World	169	1

All residents in households where head of household was born in NC or Pakistan 7807 59 Δ

Residents born in UK and living in a household headed by someone born in NC or Pakistan.

Age Group	Number	%
aged 0-15	2194	28*
aged 16-29	260	3*

(Δ % total residents in private households)
(* % residents in private households headed by someone born in NCWP by age groups shown)

Comparison with 1971

Category	1971	1981	% difference 1971-1981
All residents 1971	13740		
All residents 1981		13314	
% difference 1971-1981			-3.1

Work

Workforce

Category	Number	%
All residents aged 16+	9737	
All economically active	6377	100
of which those self employed	350	5

Full Time/Part Time Workers

Category	Full Time	%	Part Time	%
All employees	4871	100	617	100
Women employees	1750	36	552	33

Single Parents with Children Aged 0-15

Category	Number	%
Not in employment	1	2 Δ
Working full time	21	43 Δ
Working part time	8	16 Δ

(Δ % of total single parents with children aged 0-15)

Unemployed Residents

Total seeking work 644 which is 10% of all econ. active

Males seeking work 415 which is 11% of male econ. active

Females seeking work 229 which is 9% of female econ. active

Total not in employment aged

Age Group	Number	%
16-19	94	19
20-24	166	16
25-49	337	9
50-64	115	9

% of the econ. active in each age group

Socio-Economic Group (10% sample)

Socio-Economic Group	Econ. active	%	Unemployed	%
Managerial/Professional	510	7	30	4
Other non-manual	1870	24	120	6
Skilled manual	1640	21	130	8
Semi-skilled	1900	24	160	8
Unskilled	500	6	40	8
Others	550	7	380	15

% of total economically active or retired

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1981 Census – Ward Profile

Basic facts on the ward population and its characteristics

NORTHCOTE WARD



Residents

Total Residents 13384 100 %

(All % in this section are of this figure except those marked * or ▲)

Age of Residents

Age Group	Count	%
0-4	1318	10
5-15	2886	22
16-24	2695	20
25-44	3518	26
45-64	2220	17
Over 65	747	5

Residents Country of Birth

Country of Birth	Count	%
United Kingdom	5539	41
Total New Commonwealth & Pakistan	7573	57
Ireland	111	0.8
Rest of Europe	30	0.2
Rest of World	129	1

All residents in households where head of household was born in NC or Pakistan 11422 85▲

Residents born in UK and living in a household headed by someone born in NC or Pakistan.

Age Group	Count	%
aged 0-15	3378	30★
aged 16-29	469	4★

(▲ % total residents in private households)
(★ % residents in private households headed by someone born in NCWP by age groups shown)

Comparison with 1971

Year	Count	% difference 1971-1981
All residents 1971	16302	
All residents 1981	13384	
% difference 1971-1981		-17.9

Work

Workforce

Category	Count	%
All residents aged 16+	9190	23
All economically active	6178	100
of which those self employed	246	4

Full Time/Part Time Workers

Category	Full Time	%	Part Time	%
All employees	4786	100	342	30
Women employees	1664	35	296	57

Single Parents with Children Aged 0-15

Category	Count	%
Not in employment	5	17▲
Working full time	9	30▲
Working part time	4	13▲

(▲ % of total single parents with children aged 0-15)

Unemployed Residents

Total seeking work 847 which is 13% of all econ. active

Males seeking work 501 which is 15% of male econ. active

Females seeking work 346 which is 15% of female econ. active

Age Group	Count	%
Total not in employment aged 16-19	168	32
20-24	205	19
25-49	409	12
50-64	141	13

% of the econ. active in each age group

Socio-Economic Group (10% sample)

Category	Econ. active	%	Unemployed	%
Managerial/Professional	330	5	20	0.3
Other non-manual	910	13	60	0.3
Skilled manual	1330	20	120	2
Semi-skilled	2380	35	200	3
Unskilled	690	10	40	0.6
Others	620	9	550	8

% of total economically active or retired

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Households

Total Private Households	3067	% 100
(all % in this section are of this figure except those marked * or Δ)		
Household Composition		
Lone parent household	32	1
Households with 3 or more dependent children	888	29
Household Size		
1 person	343	11
2 persons	450	15
3-5 persons	1359	44
6+ persons	913	30
Pensioner Households		
Households with 1 or more pensioners	694	23
Households composed entirely of pensioners	318	10
Households of 1 person aged 75+	96	3
Household Tenure		
Owner occupied	2329	76
Council or housing association rented	269	9
Privately rented unfurnished	218	7
Privately rented furnished	251	8

Type of Household Space		
Purpose-built flats	95	3
Houses/separate entrance	2557	83
Converted self contained flats	186	6
Other flats not self contained	230	8
(* % of total resident household spaces)		
Household Accommodation		
Total household spaces	3259	100
Unoccupied	5	0.2
Vacant	111	3
(Δ % of total household spaces all occupancy)		
Size of Accommodation		
1 room	116	4
2 rooms	114	4
3-4 rooms	571	19
5-6 rooms	2117	59
7+ rooms	147	5
Selected Household Characteristics		
Exclusive use of inside bath & W.C.	2655	87
Inside bath and/or W.C. shared	240	8
Neither bath nor W.C. inside	39	-
1-1.5 persons per room	657	21
Over 1.5 persons per room	345	11
Households with no car	1306	43
Households with 2 or more cars	350	11

Compared with the Borough

Compared with Ealing as a whole, Northcote ward has a higher proportion of:-

Residents aged 0-4, 5-15 and 16-24
 Residents born in the New Commonwealth and Pakistan
 Residents in households where head of household was born in NC or Pakistan
 Single parents not in employment
 Both men and women seeking work
 Unemployed residents in each age group
 Skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled manual economically active residents
 Other economically active residents
 Households with 3 or more dependent children
 3-5 and 6+ person households
 Owner occupied households
 Houses: separate entrance
 Flats not self contained
 Households with 5-6 rooms
 Households with a shared bath and/or WC
 Households with 1-1.5 and over 1.5 persons per room
 Households with no car

1981 Census - Ward Profile

Basic facts on the ward population and its characteristics

WAXLOW WARD



Residents

		%
Total Residents	12013	100

All % in this section are of this figure except those marked * or ▲

Age of Residents

0-4	855	7
5-15	2007	17
16-24	1820	15
25-44	3550	30
45-64	2427	20
Over 65	1354	11

Residents Country of Birth

United Kingdom	8391	70
Total New Commonwealth & Pakistan	2788	23
India	479	4
Rest of Europe	191	2
Rest of World	164	1

All residents in households where head of household was born in NC or Pakistan 4057 33 ▲

Residents born in UK and living in a household headed by someone born in NC or Pakistan.

aged 0-15	1100	27★
aged 16-25	162	4★

(▲ % total residents in private households)
(★ % residents in private households headed by someone born in NCWP by age groups shown)

Comparison with 1971

All residents 1971	12579
All residents 1981	12013
% difference 1971-1981	-4.5

Work

Workforce

All residents aged 16 +	9151	
All economically active	6025	100
of which those self employed	402	7

Full Time/Part Time Workers

	Full Time	%	Part Time	%
All employees	4606	100	741	100
Women employees	1578	34	682	92

Single Parents with Children Aged 0-15

Not in employment	3	4 ▲
Working full time	26	37 ▲
Working part time	14	20 ▲

(▲ % of total single parents with children aged 0-15)

Unemployed Residents

Total seeking work 397 which is 6% of all econ. active

Males seeking work 249 which is 7% of male econ. active

Females seeking work 148 which is 6% of female econ. active

Total not in employment aged

16-19	62	12
20-24	83	10
25-49	208	5
50-64	89	7

% of the econ. active in each age group

Socio-Economic Group (10% sample)

	Econ. active	%	Unemployed	%
Managerial/Professional	780	11	10	0.1
Other non-manual	2230	32	60	0.9
Skilled-manual	1540	22	80	1
Semi-skilled	1150	17	60	0.9
Unskilled	340	5	0	-
Others	200	3	160	2

% of total economically active or retired

These Information Notes are produced by the Town Planning Division of the Technical Services Group, for each ward in Ealing. Borough totals are also available in this format. More detailed information is available in the Census Digest (November 1982) and from the Town Planning Division, 24 Uxbridge Road, Ealing W5 2BP, Telephone 579 2424 extension 2555.

Nov 1983

Households

Total Private Households	3920	100
(all % in this section are of this figure except those marked * or ▲)		
Household Composition		
Lone parent household	69	2
Households with 3 or more dependant children	408	10
Household Size		
1 person	617	16
2 persons	1129	29
3-5 persons	1886	48
6 + persons	288	7
Pensioner Households		
Households with 1 or more pensioners	1148	29
Households composed entirely of pensioners	704	18
Households of 1 person aged 75 -	179	5
Household Tenure		
Owner occupied	3188	81
Council or housing association rented	393	10
Privately rented unfurnished	221	6
Privately rented furnished	118	3

Type of Household Space		
Purpose-built flats	323	8 *
Houses/separate entrance	3473	89 *
Converted self contained flats	61	2 *
Other flats not self contained	63	2 *
(* % of total resident household spaces)		
Household Accommodation		
Total household spaces	4147	100
Unoccupied	3	0.1 ▲
Vacant	122	3 ▲
(▲ % of total household spaces all occupancy)		
Size of Accommodation		
1 room	34	1
2 rooms	87	2
3-4 rooms	1291	33
5-6 rooms	2383	61
7+ rooms	125	3
Selected Household Characteristics		
Exclusive use of inside bath & W.C.	3825	93
Inside bath and/or W.C. shared	77	2
Neither bath nor W.C. inside	8	0.2
1-1.5 persons per room	291	7
Over 1.5 persons per room	89	2
Households with no car	1162	30
Households with 2 or more cars	708	18

Compared with the Borough

Compared with Ealing as a whole, Waxlow ward has a higher proportion of:-

Residents aged 5-15 and 25-44
 Residents born in the New Commonwealth and Pakistan
 Women in part time work
 Single parents working full and part time
 Other non-manual, skilled and semi-skilled manual economically active residents
 Households with 3 or more dependant children
 3-5 person households
 Owner occupied households
 Houses/separate entrance
 Households with 5-6 rooms
 Households with exclusive use of an inside bath and WC
 Households with 2 or more cars

CENSUS ABSTRACTS

(for borough and ward comparisons)

All figures taken from the 1981 census: Ward and Borough Profiles, London Borough of Ealing, Town Planning Division, Technical Services Group 1982.

Page references:

Census 1/25	for Column 1	(Ealing)
Census 1/10	for Column 2	(Northcote)
Census 1/11	for Column 3	(Mountpleasant)
Census 1/16	for Column 4	(Glebe)
Census 1/3	for Column 5	(Dormers Wells)
Census 1/22	for Column 6	(Waxlow)

-XIII-

Easing
Borough

Residents

Total Residents

(All % in this section are of this figure except those marked * or Δ)

Age of Residents

0-4
5-15
16-24
25-44
45-64
Over 65

Residents Country of Birth

United Kingdom
Total New Commonwealth & Pakistan
Eire
Rest of Europe
Rest of World

All residents in households where head of household was born in NC or Pakistan

Residents born in UK and living in a household headed by someone born in NC or Pakistan,

aged 0-15
aged 16-29

(Δ % total residents in private households)
(* % residents in private households headed by someone born in NCWP by age groups shown)

Comparison with 1971

All residents 1971
All residents 1981

% difference 1971-1981

North- cote	Mount- pleas- ant	Glebe	Dorm- er's Wells	Wax- low
% 100	% 100	% 100	% 100	% 100
10	8	10	8	7
22	19	19	16	17
20	17	18	15	15
26	27	28	25	30
17	19	17	21	20
5	10	8	15	11
41	56	49	70	70
57	40	48	24	23
0.8	2	2	3	4
0.2	1	0.5	1	2
.1	1	1	2	1
85Δ	59Δ	71Δ	39Δ	33Δ
30*	28*	30*	32*	27*
4*	3*	3*	4*	4*
-17.9	-3.7	2.5	2.5	-4.5

278677	100
17772	17
39971	14
42736	15
78770	28
60419	22
39008	14
200010	72
47312	17
12418	4
9839	4
7325	3
69755	25Δ
19020	86*
3835	19*

Work

Workforce

All residents aged 16 +

All economically active

of which those self employed

Full Time/Part Time Workers

All employees

Women employees

Single Parents with Children

Aged 0-15

Not in employment

Working full time

Working part time

(Δ % of total single parents with children

aged 0-15)

Unemployed Residents

Total seeking work

Males seeking work

Females seeking work

Total not in employment aged

16-19

20-24

25-49

50-64

% of the econ. actives in each age group

Socio-Economic Group (10% sample)

Managerial/

Professional

Other non-manual

Skilled manual

Semi-skilled

Unskilled

Others

% of total economically active or retired

Taling Borough

220934

145087

10848

105511

39268

105511

37

16377

14594

229

348

348

10 Δ

32 Δ

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Ealing
Borough

Households

Total Private Households

(all % in this section are of
this figure except those
marked ★ or ▲)

Household Composition

Lone parent household
Households with 3 or more
dependent children

Household Size

1 person
2 persons
3-5 persons
6 + persons

Pensioner Households

Households with 1 or more
pensioners
Households composed
entirely of pensioners
Households of 1 person
aged 75 +

Household Tenure

Owner occupied
Council or housing
association rented
Privately rented unfurnished
Privately rented furnished

North- cote	Mount Pleas- ant.	Glebe	Dormer's Wells	Wax- low
% 100	% 100	% 100	% 100	% 100
1	1	2	5	2
29	17	20	12	10
11	15	14	19	16
15	22	22	28	29
44	47	45	45	48
30	16	19	8	7
23	29	27	31	29
10	16	14	19	18
3	4	3	5	5
76	68	70	40	81
9	21	16	53	10
7	6	8	4	6
8	5	6	3	3

Progressing Race Equality Series
Policy & Research Report Number 1

April 1989

BLACK & OTHER ETHNIC MINORITIES: KEY FACTS 1

A DIGEST OF CENSUS & OTHER STATISTICS



Figure 6.
Geographical distribution of the New Commonwealth & Pakistan
population by wards

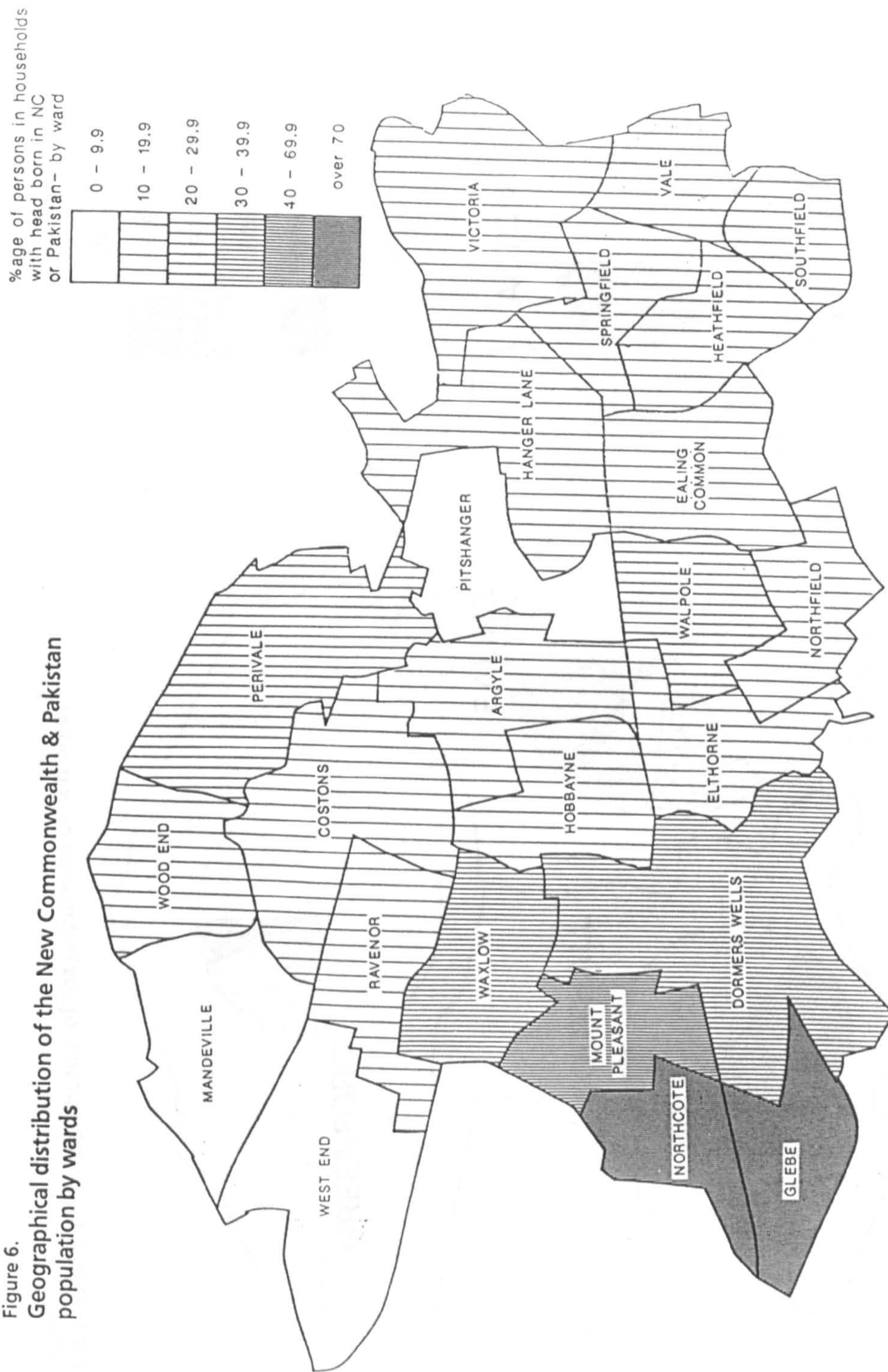
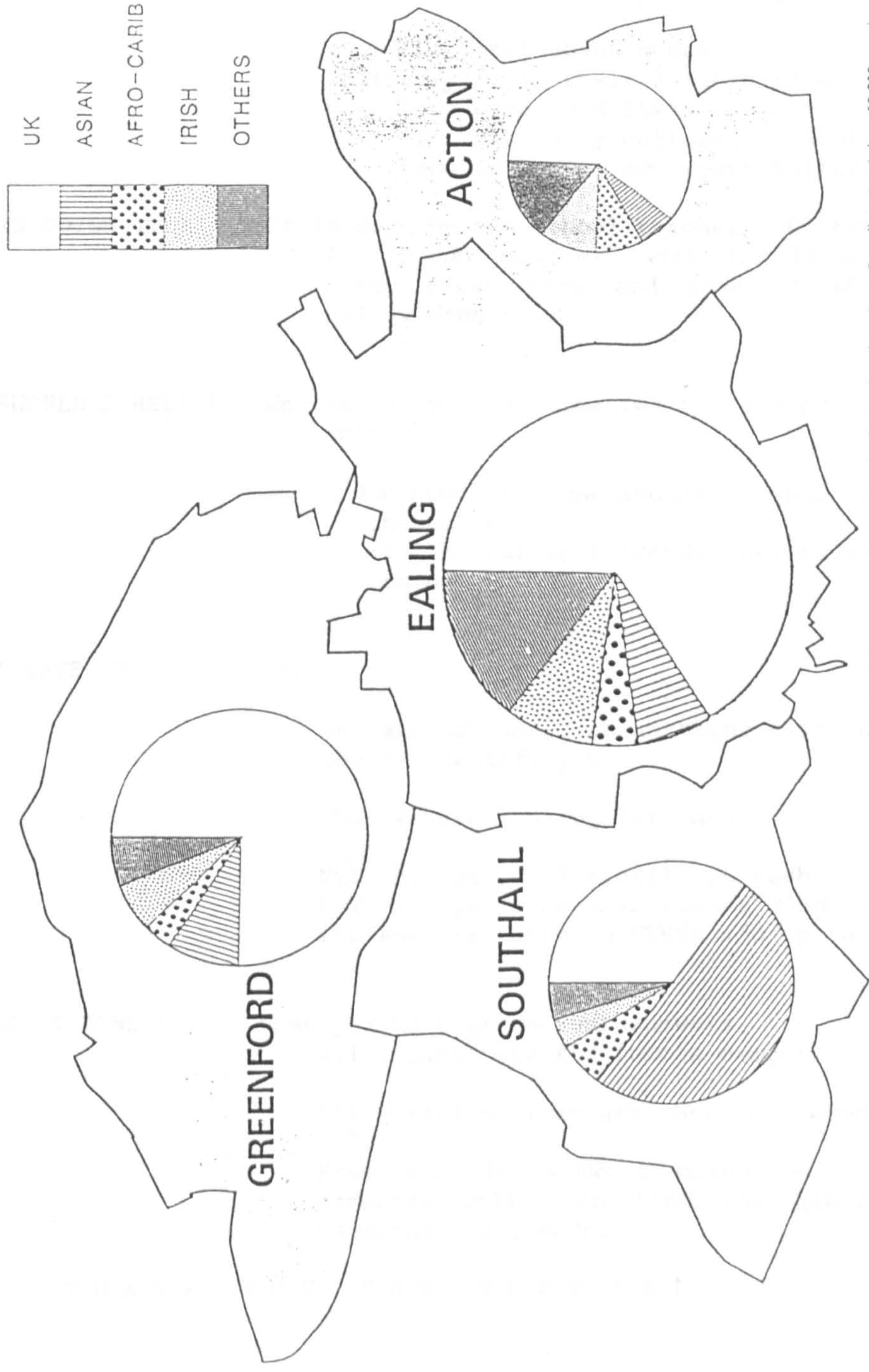


Figure 7.
L.B.E. Ealing: Ethnic distribution of the population by sub-areas.



NB: The circles are proportionate to each other and are based on a 5cm diameter circle = 65,000 people

Based on data from 1981 Census.

T H E S O U T H A L L S T U D E N T S ' S U R V E Y ' 8 9

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE: SOME EXPLANATIONS

WHAT IS THIS ABOUT ? This is a survey done in all 3 High Schools

It is about Southall youth, especially:

what they feel about school
what they do in their leisure time
how they see THEMSELVES
in the many cultures of Southall
and in their own youth culture.

WHO IS DOING IT ? It is done by two school-teachers who study
for Higher Degrees, with the help of
their supervisors and some of their
fellow-students

WHY SHOULD I HELP ? We ask for your information for one purpose
only:

- to find out how Southall youth see themselves
- to find out what trends they have in common

IS IT SAFE ? Yes.

We take no names, or anything else that
could identify you.

What we are looking for, are:

NOT your personal profile as such
BUT the patterns and trends that ALL
the answers taken TOGETHER add up to.

HOW IS IT DONE ? When you have given your answers,
all answers are fed into a computer.

All questionnaires are then destroyed.

From all the answers mixed up, the
computer will then find the general
patterns and trends.

T H A N K Y O U F O R Y O U R H E L P

CHAPTER 1. PLEASE FILL IN SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF:

How old are you ? - I am _____ years old.

Tick which sex you are :

male _____

female _____

Please write ONE of the jobs you would like to take after your education is finished: _____

Write down your father's last or present job: _____

Write down if your mother has a job : _____

How many unmarried sisters or brothers do you have? _____

On a normal day, how many people EAT in your house ? _____

Do you have one or more grand-parents in or near Southall ?

Please tick: yes _____
 no _____

How many cousins do you have in or near Southall ?

Please tick:

none	_____
1 to 5	_____
5 to 10	_____
more	_____

CHAPTER 2. THE BACKGROUND OF YOUR PARENTS

EXPLANATION: This information is important to work out the patterns and trends. The quickest way to do this, is to start with Religion, and then to answer only 3 other questions. You can see WHICH of the next pages are RIGHT for you.

IF YOUR FATHER OR MOTHER ARE SIKH, use THIS page:

If NEITHER of them are Sikh, then turn to the next page.

My father or mother are Sikh.
They worship at:

Father Mother

Havelock Road	—	—
Oswald Road	—	—
Western Road	—	—
Park Avenue	—	—
Clifton Road	—	—
Featherstone Road	—	—

No: another Gurudwara,
which is at _____

My parents were born in:

a small village	—	—
a country town	—	—
a city	—	—

This is where my parents have lived:

always in Britain	—	—
also in India	—	—
also in East Africa	—	—

also in (please write):

Father:	Mother:
_____	_____

IF YOU HAVE TICKED FOR BOTH YOUR PARENTS, YOU CAN JUMP TO
CHAPTER 3. Page number at bottom is: page 11.

IF YOUR FATHER OR MOTHER ARE HINDU, please use THIS page:

My parents speak:	Father	Mother
Gujarati	—	—
Punjabi	—	—
Hindi	—	—
No, another language:	_____	_____

They were born in:	Father	Mother
a small village	—	—
a country town	—	—
a city	—	—

This is where my parents have lived:		
always in Britain	—	—
also in East Africa	—	—
also in Punjab	—	—
also in Gujarat	—	—
also in India	—	—
No, somewhere else, that was in: (please write:)		
	Father:	Mother:
	_____	_____

IF YOU HAVE TICKED FOR BOTH YOUR PARENTS,
YOU CAN JUMP TO CHAPTER 3. Page number at boom is: page 11.

IF YOUR MOTHER OR FATHER ARE MUSLIM, please use THIS page:

Father Mother

My parents were born in:

a small village	—	—
a country town	—	—
a city	—	—

This is where they have lived:

always in Britain	—	—
also in East Africa	—	—
also in Lahore	—	—
also in Punjab	—	—
also in Mirpur	—	—
also somewhere else in Pakistan	—	—
also somewhere else in India	—	—
also in Bangla Desh	—	—

IF YOU HAVE TICKED FOR BOTH YOUR PARENTS,
YOU CAN JUMP TO CHAPTER 3. Page number at bottom is: page 11.

IF YOUR MOTHER OR FATHER ARE CHRISTIAN, please write HERE:

Their Church is:

	Father	Mother
Anglican (C of E)	—	—
Catholic	—	—
Methodist	—	—
Baptist	—	—
Presbyterian	—	—
7th Day Adventist	—	—
Spiritualist	—	—

No: a Church called:

Father: Mother:

They were born in:

a small village	—	—
a country town	—	—
a city	—	—

Write down the country where they were born:

Father: Mother:

If they have also lived
in another country outside
Britain, please write it:

IF YOU HAVE TICKED FOR BOTH YOUR PARENTS,
YOU CAN JUMP TO CHAPTER 3. Page number at bottom is: page 11.

IF YOUR FATHER OR MOTHER ARE OF A DIFFERENT RELIGION,
PLEASE USE THIS PAGE :

	Father	Mother
Their religion is:	_____	_____
They were born in (country):	_____	_____
They have also lived in (country:)	_____	_____

Please tick whether they were born in

a small village	—	—
a country town	—	—
a city	—	—

NEW CHAPTER FOR EVERYBODY:

CHAPTER 3. CONTACT BETWEEN ALL RELIGIONS AND CULTURES

1. Southall has many different cultures.
Please write down some cultures that you know are around:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Now please TICK the ONE culture that you would MOST like to LEARN about.

2. Of the RELIGIONS that are NOT YOUR OWN, name the ONE that you know MOST about:

3. How did you learn about it? Please tick which were of most use:

a friend from school	_____
a friend from outside school	_____
school assemblies	_____
my family	_____
other relatives	_____
Religious Education at school	_____

school subjects like: _____

TV programmes like: _____

Anything else ? _____

4. Where do you think that young people meet most other people who are not from the same culture ? Tick as many as you think:

youth club	—
leisure centre	—
sports clubs	—
friends at school	—
friends in the street	—
family and relatives	—
disco	—
gangs	—
friends' parties	—
games arcades	—
place of worship	—

Anywhere else you were thinking of ? _____

5. In the last month , have you been to any of these places ?
Please tick to say Yes:

youth club	—
leisure centre	—
sports club	—
friends' parties	—
discos	—
games arcade	—
place of worship	—

outside Southall with family	—
outside Southall without family	—
outside Southall with friends	—
outside Southall alone	—
in a cinema	—

6. Think of the FIVE people you spend most time with OUTSIDE school. Does any of them:

speak Punjabi at home	—
speak Urdu at home	—
speak Hindi at home	—
speak English only	—

have a different religion from you	—
is not from your school	—

CHAPTER 4. YOUR EDUCATION

7. How was your High School chosen ? Please tick one or more:

Because I had friends here	—
Because my brother or sister was here	—
Because I had a cousin here	—
Because I had other relations here	—
Because my parents chose it	—
Because it is close to home	—
Because it had good sports facilities	—

8. How much importance is your own culture given in school lessons?

Tick one box:

too much	—
too little	—
just right	—
none at all	—

9. For school events like outings, discos and entertainments, are your own wishes taken seriously enough ?

too much	—
too little	—
just right	—
not at all	—

10. Which of these subjects would you think of choosing if they were offered ? Please tick a few:

Asian languages	—
Creole languages	—
More European languages	—
African languages	—
Irish language	—
American English	—
Third World Studies	—
Economics	—
World Politics	—
Women's Studies	—
Religious Studies in my OWN religion	—
Religious Studies in OTHER religions	—
Black Studies	—
History outside Britain	—
World Music (e.g. Bhangra, Reggae, Hip Hop)	—
American literature	—
Asian literature	—
Black Literature	—

11. In your opinion, should there be separate schools for
different religions ? Tick: yes: —
 no : —
 Don't know: —

12. Write how many hours you spent on homework last week:

(You can also use half or zero.)

The MOST on a weekday was : — hours
The LEAST on a weekday was : — hours
On Saturday it was : — hours
On Sunday it was : — hours

13. Tick who has helped you with homework over the last month:

	once a week	more often
My Father	—	—
My Mother	—	—
My Sister	—	—
My Brother	—	—
A Cousin	—	—
Another relative	—	—
A school-friend from my own religion	—	—
A school-friend from another religion	—	—
A friend who takes money for it	—	—
A private tutor	—	—

14. Please tick what you know about the education of your PARENTS :

My parents:

	Father	Mother
Went to school as a child	—	—
Finished primary school	—	—
Reads English easily	—	—
Writes English easily	—	—
Reads another language	—	—
Can write this other language	—	—
Finished Secondary School	—	—
Finished an Apprenticeship	—	—
Learnt a Trade	—	—
Went to a College	—	—
Finished College	—	—
Went to a Poly or University	—	—
Finished Poly or University	—	—

15. Please tick what you THINK you will do after the age of 16.

I will work	—
I will study more at school	—
I will marry soon after school	—
I will do vocational training	—
I will study at a college	—
I will study at a poly	—
I will study at a university	—
I don't know yet	—

16. Please write down your three favourite subjects HERE:
You can jusdt use the first few letters:)

1:_____ 2:_____ 3:_____

Now please tick
WHY you like it :

It is easy	—	—	—
It is interesting	—	—	—
I like the teacher	—	—	—
I am with friends	—	—	—
It's useful for a good job	—	—	—

17. Please write down three subjects that you DON'T like HERE :

1:_____ 2:_____ 3:_____

Tick why you
dislike it :

It is difficult	—	—	—
It is not interesting	—	—	—
I don't like the teacher	—	—	—
I don't have friends in it	—	—	—
It is not useful for later	—	—	—

CHAPTER 5. YOUR TIME OUTSIDE SCHOOL

18. In your family, do you have fixed rules about these things:
Please tick what right NOW is true for YOU :

set times for doing homework	—
doing homework at the week-end	—
times for going out in the day	—
times for going out at night	—
I don't go out at night	—
Any school-friends you CAN'T bring home	—
boys you should keep away from	—
girls you should keep away from	—
house-work to share with your brothers	—
house-work to share with your sisters	—
helping your father	—
helping your mother	—
earning yourself money INSIDE the family	—
earning yourself money OUTSIDE the family	—
helping the FAMILY earn money	—
praying at home	—
going to worship	—
time to start watching TV	—
time to stop watching TV	—
not watching sex on TV	—
not watching violence on TV	—
time for watching videos	—
videos you can't watch	—
recording programmes for yourself	—
any reading you SHOULD do	—
RELIGIOUS reading you SHOULD do	—
reading your are not allowed	—

19. In the last week, what were the things that interrupted you
while doing homework ? Please tick :

I had to help my father	—
I had to help my mother	—
I had to help a brother or sister	—
I watched some TV	—
I put on a video	—

I listened to the radio
I had a friend calling round
We had family visitors

SPORTS:

20. Which of these sports do you like ?

- football
- cricket
- rugby
- hockey
- rounders
- netball
- volleyball
- basket-ball
- kabaddi
- hand-ball
- wrestling
- karate
- judo
- Taek Won Do
- swimming
- table tennis
- squash
- tennis
- weights
- body building
- American Football
- badminton
- snooker
- boxing
- Chinese boxing
- Kateda

21. Which of these would you like to try IN THE FUTURE ?

- cricket
- rugby
- hockey
- rounders
- netball
- volleyball
- basket-ball
- kabaddi
- hand-ball
- wrestling
- karate
- judo
- Taek Won Do

swimming	—
table tennis	—
squash	—
tennis	—
weights	—
body building	—
American Football	—
badminton	—
snooker	—
boxing	—
Chinese boxing	—
Kateda	—

Another sport (say which:) _____

22. Do you go to a sports club ?

No, I don't	—
No, but I'd like to	—
Yes, I do.	—
It's only for girls	—
It's only for boys	—
It's specially for people from my own religion	—
It has people from ALL cultures	—

23. Please place a tick where you agree:

In school, there should be more team sports ?	—
In school, there should be more self-defence sports ?	—
Self-defence sports are good for boys AND girls ?	—
Self-defence sports lead to trouble and fights ?	—
Self-defence sports give people more safety ?	—

THE MEDIA

24. Please tick for everything that you have in your house:

a fixed colour TV	—
a second fixed colour TV	—
a third fixed colour TV	—
a portable colour TV	—
a black-and-white TV	—
a portable black-and-white TV	—

Please tick WHICH of these you have at home:

remote control for TV	—
teletext on TV	—
prestel viewdata on TV	—
a video recorder	—
cable TV	—
a satellite dish	—
a home computer	—
video games	—
a video camera	—
a hi-fi stereo	—
a second hifi	—
a walkman	—
a second walkman	—
a radio	—
a second radio	—

25. Please tick all the rooms where you have a TV set at home:

in the main living room	—
in the other living room	—
in the dining room	—
in the kitchen	—
in the main bedroom	—
in a children's bedroom	—

Also in another room: the _____ room

26. Please write WHO in your family uses the remote control MOST of the time:

27. Can YOU yourself use the video recorder to record programmes when you are not at home ? Tick: yes _____
no _____

28. Last week, how many TV programmes did you record for yourself ?
Please write the number: _____

29. Is this a normal number ? Please tick:

Most weeks I record more than that	—
Most weeks I record less than that	—
Most weeks that is normal	—

30. Which ONE of these channels do your FAIMLY watch MOST ?

Tick one or two:	BBC 1	—
	BBC 2	—
	ITV	—
	Channel 4	—

31. Which one of them do YOU personally LIKE most ?

BBC 1	—
BBC 2	—
ITV	—
Channel 4	—

32. Please tick which of these films you have watched ?

Nightmare on Elm Street	—
Beverley Hills Cop	—
Police Academy	—
Commando	—
Jai Santoshi Maa	—
Rambo	—
The Evil Dead	—
Salaam Bombay	—
Dirty Dancing	—
Mother India	—
Gandhi	—
My Beautiful Launderette	—
Pather Panchali	—
Cry Freedom	—

33. Please tick which of these programmes you have watched last week:

TV news	—
a current affairs programme	—
a pop music programme	—

- a science fiction film ☐
- a crime series ☐
- a quiz programme ☐
- a comedy ☐
- a nature and wildlife programme ☐
- a cartoon ☐
- a soap opera ☐
- a game show ☐
- a science programme ☐
- a children's programme ☐
- a documentary ☐

34. Please tick which of these programmes you often watch with the whole family ?

- TV news ☐
- pop music programmes ☐
- science fiction ☐
- crime series ☐
- quiz programmes ☐
- current affairs ☐
- comedy programmes ☐
- nature and wildlife programmes ☐
- cartoons ☐
- soap operas ☐
- game shows ☐
- science programmes ☐
- children's programmes ☐
- documentaries ☐
- home-made family videos ☐
- English films on video ☐
- American films on video ☐
- Indian films on video ☐
- Indian soap operas on video ☐

35. Which of these do you talk about with your FATHER or MOTHER ?
Please, look back and place a SECOND tick . Thank you.

36. Please tick which of these you would prefer to watch WITHOUT any older people :

- pop music programmes ☐
- science fiction ☐
- crime series ☐
- comedy programmes ☐
- cartoons ☐
- soap operas ☐
- English films on video ☐
- American films on video ☐
- Indian films on video ☐
- Indian soap operas on video ☐

37. Do you ever watch Indian films ? Please tick:

no, never	—
very seldom	—
maybe once a month	—
I used to, but I've stopped	—
usually once a week	—
more than once a week	—
most weekends	—
most days	—

38. What do you like or dislike about them ? Please tick:

I enjoy them	—
I find them too slow	—
They help me with the language	—
They TELL me something about Asia	—
They DO NOT show the real Asia	—
They bring the family together	—
They tell me about my religion	—
My parents like me to watch them	—
I can watch them with friends	—
They teach me about Asian culture	—
I like the songs and dances most	—
I like the action most	—
I like the dialogue most	—
I like watching the stars	—
I don't like any of it	—

39. Please tick which of these programmes you have watched several times:

Soul Train	—
Bandung File	—
Movie Mahal	—
Network East	—
Teesra Kinara	—
Shrikant	—
Cosby Show	—
Channel 4: Indian Movie Season (when it was ON)	—

40. Which of these radio stations did you listen to last week ?

BBC Radio 1 —
BBC Radio 2 —
BBC Radio 3 —
BBC Radio 4 —

Apna Radio —
JBC —
Sabrang Radio —
London Asian Radio —
Asian Community Radio —
West London Radio —
Trax FM —
DEF FM —
HiPower —
Fresh FM —
City Radio —
CDR —
TKO —
Time FM —
GLR —
Capital Radio —
Q 102 —

41. Have you got a favourite radio programme that you tune into regularly ?

No, I don't: —

Yes, I do : it's: _____

NOW IT IS BEST TO PLACE YOUR TICKS IN TOTAL SILENCE.

PLEASE TURN OVER THE PAGE UNTIL YOU FIND ONE THAT IS RIGHT

FOR YOU.

IF YOU HAVE A VIDEO AT HOME, PLEASE write on THIS page and the next

IF YOU DON'T, THEN PLEASE TURN TWO PAGES ON.

42. Last week (including the week-end): how many videos did your family borrow ? Please tick:

none	—
1 to 3	—
3 to 6	—
6 to 10	—
more than 10	—

43. Is this the usual number ? Please tick:

Most weeks, this is normal	—
Most weeks, we have more	—
Most weeks, we have less	—
In summer, we have more	—
In winter, we have more	—

44. In a normal week, how many of your family's videos do you yourself watch from start to finish ?

Tick the right box:	none	—
	1 or 2	—
	about half	—
	most of them	—
	all of them	—

45. Please tick where your families get videos from:

always the same video shop	—
two or three video shops	—

AND ALSO :

relatives in England	—
relatives abroad	—
father's friends from work	—
mother's friends from work	—
neighbours	—
your school-friends	—

Also other people ? (say which:)

46. In your household video library, how many tapes do you have in all ? Tick the right box:

less than 10	—
10 to 20	—
20 to 30	—
30 to 50	—
more than 50	—
more than 100	—

47. Tick the three or four which of these you have MOST of at home:

recordings from TV	—
pop videos	—
English films	—
American films	—
Indian films	—
home-made family videos	—
Indian soaps	—
religious films	—
other videos (say which kind:)	_____

IF you have CABLE TV, please do THIS page.

IF YOU DON'T, SKIP TO THE NEXT PAGE, PLEASE.

48. If you have Cable at home, please tick the channels that you can remember watching last week:

Premiere	—
Indra Dhnush	—
HVC	—
Children's	—
Screen Sport	—
CNN	—
Arts Channel	—
Community Channel	—
MTV	—
Sky	—
Bravo	—
Lifestyle	—
Super Channel	—
Worldwatch 1	—
Worldwatch 2	—
Worldwatch 3	—
TV 5	—
Moskva	—

IF you have a satellite dish, what are the programmes you can remember watching last week ?

IF YOU DON'T HAVE A DISH, YOU CAN SKIP TO THE NEXT PAGE.

49. Please write some of the programmes that you remember watching on Satellite last week :

IF YOU DON'T HAVE A VIDEO RECORDER, OR CABLE, OR SATELLITE,
PLEASE WRITE ON THIS PAGE :

50. Please write down the TV programmes that you try to watch every week:

51. Are there any TV programmes that you would LIKE to watch every week, but can't ?

IF YOU ARE IN FOURTH YEAR OR OLDER, PLASE ANSWER THESE TWO QUESTIONS:

If not, turn the page.

52. How was your last Option choice made ?
Please tick:

I decided on my own	—
I asked my parents	—
My parents told me	—
I asked my friends	—
I asked a teacher	—
A teacher told me	—
I got what I was given	—

53. Which of these points mattered MOST in your Option choice ?

It is easy to pass	—
It is good for my career	—
I like the teacher	—

People think it is a subject for boys	—
--	---

I think it is a subject for boys	—
-------------------------------------	---

People think it is a subject for girls	—
---	---

I think it is a subect for girls	—
-------------------------------------	---

My best friends did it	—
------------------------	---

I had good exam results before	—
-----------------------------------	---

I had bad exam results before	—
----------------------------------	---

54. This question is for all students BELOW the Fourth Year.

How are you PLANNING to make your Option choice ?

I will decide on my own	—
I will ask my parents	—
My parents will decide	—
I will ask my friends	—
I will ask a teacher	—
I will let a teacher decide	—

NOW WE ANSWER ALL TOGETHER AGAIN :

CHAPTER 6. YOUR TASTE AND YOUR FAVOURITE STYLES :

55. Please place a tick for each kind of music you like:

Blues	—
Soul	—
Reggae	—
Punk	—
Bhangra	—
Ghazals	—
Bhajans	—
Charts	—
Pop	—
Funk	—
Lovers	—
House	—
Hip Hop	—
Heavy Metal	—
American	—
Disco	—
Classical	—
Rap	—
Rock	—
Ragamuffin	—
Salsa	—
Country & Western	—
Calypso	—
Sitar and Tabla	—
Ghazals	—
Acid	—
Boogie	—
Fifties Slow	—
Sixties Music	—
Folk Music from	_____
Traditional Music from	_____

56. Please tick the dances you most enjoy:

Just moving with the music	—
Moving a LOT	—
NOT moving a lot	
Trying a Break-Dance	—
Trying a Body-Pop	—
Doing an East-West Mix	—
Dancing Traditional Bhangra	—
Doing House Bhangra	—
Doing a Black'n White Mix	—
Jiving	—
Rail Ghaddi	—
Disco	—
Folk Dance	—
Dances where I KNOW the right steps	—

57. In your OWN dress and style and showing-yourself, what are the most important things to you ?

To look cool	—
To look totally personal	—
To look elegant or sophisticated	—
To respect my culture	—
To show a bit of class	—
To be like my friends	—
To be respectable	—
To show modesty	—
To show guts	—
To stay OK with my parents	—
To show self-esteem	—
To rebel against rules	—

58. Name ONE or TWO or MORE of the Stars or Famous people (men or women) with the best "Style" . Don't bother to order them. Write quickly please :

I like: _____

'GOING OUT' AND MARRIAGE

59. Here are some statements that young people have made to us. Please tick the ones you agree with:

- Going out with a boy or a girl is normal at my age. ☐
- My parents think it is normal at my age. ☐
- It is not normal in my culture, and I respect that. ☐
- It is wrong for any-one, unless they want to marry. ☐
- It is alright so long as you keep it secret ☐
- Going out does not HAVE to lead to marriage. ☐
- Going out SHOULD not lead to marriage. ☐
- If young people go out, it is none of the parents' business. ☐
- If I go out, it is none of my parents' business. ☐
- Parents should know about it, but be more understanding. ☐
- Parents should know about it, because they can give advice. ☐

60. Marriages between different communities are getting less in England, not more. What do you think about this ? Please tick:

- People who marry should be of the same culture. ☐
- People should be free to marry whom they like. ☐
- People should marry inside their own caste. ☐
- I personally would prefer a marriage within my own culture. ☐
- I would only enter a mixed marriage if my family agreed with it. ☐
- If I wanted a mixed marriage, I would do it against my family. ☐

HOW SHOULD THINGS IN SOUTHALL CHANGE ?

61. Here are some things that young people have said to us.
Please tick the ones that you agree with:

Southall is too isolated. It's like an island. —

Every community in Southall is like an island. —

Everybody watches what everybody else is doing here. —

My community is like an island in Southall. —

Nothing in Southall can be kept a secret. —

Not all communities are getting a fair deal. —

Write: which community is getting a bad deal ? _____

Write: How is it getting a bad deal ? _____

CHAPTER 7. YOUR OWN OPINIONS AND IDEAS

READING

62. Please tick which of these you have read last month:

- a pop magazine (like Smash Hits) _____
- a girls' magazine (like Just 17) _____
- a computer magazine _____
- a music paper (like B&G, NME) _____

- a video magazine _____
- an Indian movie mag (like Stardust) _____

- a photo-romance _____
- science fiction stories _____
- action stories _____
- adventure stories _____
- crime stories _____
- horror / ghost stories _____

- a Teach Yourself book _____
- a religious book _____
- a book that is not in English _____
- a comic that is not in English _____
- a paper that is not in English _____

a comic (say which:) _____

TRAVELLING

63. Name the country you would most like to visit: _____

Name three GOOD things about that country:

Name one BAD thing about that country.

64. Name one GOOD thing about England.

Name THE WORST thing about England.

65. Name three good things about the USA

Name three bad things about the USA

66. What divides YOUNG people in Southall, is mainly this: Please tick the more important ones:

- class ☐
- culture ☐
- the media ☐
- competition ☐
- race ☐
- fear ☐
- religion ☐
- money ☐
- school ☐
- racism ☐
- parents ☐
- politics ☐

67. What divides ADULTS in Southall, is mainly this: Please tick the more important ones:

- class ☐
- culture ☐
- the media ☐
- competition ☐
- race ☐
- fear ☐
- religion ☐

money	—
school	—
racism	—
politics	—

68. Can you think of things that UNITE young people all over Southall ? Write down one, two or three:

FINALLY, WOULD YOU PLEASE ANSWER SOME MORE QUESTIONS ON READING

69. Which papers or magazines do your parents keep at home ? Write them down and give them marks from 1 (boring) to 10 (brilliant).

PAPER OR MAGAZINE:	MY MARK FOR IT:
--------------------	-----------------

_____	—
_____	—
_____	—

70. Which one, two or three magazines would you like to buy for yourself ?

71. Roughly, how many books are there in your home ? Don't count school books and tick the right box please:

less than 10	—
10 to 30	—
30 to 50	—
more than 50	—
more than 100	—
maybe 300	—
maybe 500	—

72. What is the best book of any kind that you have ever read ?

Title: _____

Author: _____

IF you like reading, please mention another few book you have liked very much: They can be from school, from home, or your own.

Title: _____

Author: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

73. If you could make one rule for parents like your OWN parents, what would it be ?

74. If you could make ONE rule for parents who are DIFFERENT from your own parents, what would it be :

T H E E N D

T H A N K Y O U V E R Y M U C H

F O R Y O U R H E L P !

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER ONE

SOUTHALL

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THE SOUTHALL YOUTH SURVEY

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1.0 THE SOUTHALL YOUTH SURVEY: AN OVERVIEW

A questionnaire-based survey was carried out among 333 young people between the ages 12-18 in Southall from June to August 1989. As part of this ethnographic study of a London Punjabi peer culture, the aims of the survey were as follows; first, to collect data on how young people perceive themselves in the many cultures of Southall, in their own youth culture and in relation to their parental cultures; secondly, to establish patterns of media, and particularly TV, use within the broader context of their local life, leisure activities, schooling and education.

The survey was a collaborative project in that the questionnaire was designed by myself and a colleague whose research was focussed on cross-cultural peer relations in Southall. We combined our interests and made our inputs to the questionnaire both separately and jointly. Such a large scale survey also required the assistance of university students who, as part of the University's work placement scheme, helped in administering and inputting the data, using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The process of designing the questionnaire, collecting, inputting and analysing the data took place over an 18 month period, alongside fieldwork.

In this appendix selected results from the survey are presented in order to provide details of the social and cultural background of the young people who have contributed to this study. One of the central arguments of the thesis is that young peoples' uses and interpretations of TV can only be understood in the wider context of their social lives. A further methodological argument is that quantitative methods combined with ethnographic fieldwork produce data unique in their richness and depth.

This appendix is divided into 4 parts. The first part deals with the survey itself; the second part gives details of the sample profile; the third part draws together diverse data on young people's perceptions of living in Southall; and, the final part covers patterns of leisure and media use.

1.1. SURVEY RATIONALE

The present research aims at developing a previous small scale study on the culturally distinctive uses of the video cassette recorder (VCR) among families in Southall. (Gillespie, 1989). The study was based on a small number of in-depth interviews and, therefore, it was difficult to evaluate whether the distinctive uses of the VCR documented in that study were widespread or not. Thus, a survey informed by the interview data, seemed to be a logical follow-up to this first pilot study. The typicality of interviewees' responses and several hypotheses emerging from the pilot study could be tested and assessed. It was also my aim to extend the research beyond its focus on VCR use to TV consumption more generally.

A significant absence from the first study was any detailed social and cultural profile of the interviewees. The survey would be able to provide details of the social and cultural backgrounds of respondents which could then be correlated with the data on TV consumption and media use. The aim was to establish patterns of TV use and consumption, in the first instance, according to age and gender and then to see whether any statistically significant patterns emerged on the basis of other factors, such as, class, religion and parental background.

A questionnaire based survey would permit the rapid and systematic collection of large amounts of data. The data would be correlated with selected variables and analysed. Patterns of variation and co-variation would form the basis upon which inferences could be made and relationships suggested. Furthermore, it would enhance the representativeness, reliability and validity of the research overall, as well as, allow for greater precision in testing certain propositions emerging from qualitative data previously gathered. The survey results would suggest fruitful avenues to explore in greater ethnographic detail. Therefore, in conducting a survey within an ethnography of a London Punjabi peer culture, I hoped to overcome some of the problems associated with small scale empirical studies of TV

audiences, especially in terms of their validity and viability (Feurer, 1986; Hartley, 1987; Clifford and Marcus, 1986).

Moreover, it seemed that quantitative survey methods are ideally suited to the purposes of establishing broad patterns of media consumption and taste (Bourdieu, 1984) when used in conjunction with more qualitative methods. The aim was to attempt to overcome the polarity between qualitative and quantitative methods in media research and to assess their compatibility. The survey would, thus, provide a framework which would be supported with ethnographic fieldwork.

Although surveys are by no means a defining feature of anthropological fieldwork, Malinowski (1964) was convinced of their value

"In ...survey work we are given an excellent skeleton, so to speak, of tribal constitution, but it lacks flesh and blood. We learn much about the framework of their society, but within it we cannot imagine or perceive the realities of everyday human life, the even flow of everyday events, the occasional ripples of excitement over a feast or a ceremony, or some singular occurrence"

(1964:17)

Whilst the social survey counts people as units, social anthropology seeks to understand people, not as units, but as integral parts of systems and of relationships. These cannot be counted. Nevertheless, the quantitative survey combined with more qualitative research strategies can provide dimensions of typicality for case material and will enhance or verify the total ethnographic picture.

However, in recent years the survey method has been most unpopular and unfashionable among academic audience researchers who have generally favoured the use of qualitative methods. It is dismissed as positivist, empiricist and lacking in explanatory power. It is also criticised for leaving questions of 'meaning' out since the researcher is unable to tap into the subjective meanings that are held, either individually or which are shared. It is argued that the questionnaire

is not understood and answered by everyone in the same way and that it is a rigid and closed method of data collection and so fails to discover the unexpected. It is further argued that the survey in its focus on taxonomic groups (occupational groups, age groups, household types, social class, community types) fails to take account of causal groupings relationships and alliances (Moser *et al*, 1972)

However, it would appear that the majority of complaints which parade as fundamental criticisms of survey methods are usually reacting to poorly designed, inadequately conceptualised and theorised, unpiloted or just ill-managed surveys. (Marsh, 1982). Although, the survey can rarely deal with the complexity of social processes, when combined with qualitative methods, it is possible to overcome some of the inherent weaknesses of the method. There has, then, been a growing recognition among media academics of the usefulness of survey methods in establishing patterns of media consumption (Murdock, 1989)

1.2. QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN AND PILOTING

Preparation for the questionnaire design involved an examination of selected examples of quantitative research into TV audiences, much of which could be subjected to the criticisms outlined above. In fact, much TV audience research has been motivated by either commercial or political interests and, consequently, reflects the very narrow range of sponsors' interests. Audiences are invariably seen as either consumers or voters. Much quantitative research has been conducted by advertisers seeking to measure TV audiences in order to maximise exposure to their advertisements. The audience in such research has often been conceived of as a mass of atomised individuals, congenitally passive and suggestible. (Ang, 1990) However, in recent years advertisers have developed quite sophisticated statistical techniques to define and target specific, usually high spending, social groups. As Smythe (1977) has argued, advertisers do not sell products to the audience rather, TV audiences are reached, targetted and delivered to advertisers. In this context, the importance of audience measurement and ratings acquires considerable relevance. In this section I shall briefly examine three examples of audience

research; the British Audience Research Board's (BARB) regular collection of ratings figures; research sponsored by the Independent Broadcasting Association; and, a research project conducted by the Harris Research centre for the BBC on 'ethnic audiences'.

The British Audience Research Board (BARB) (an all-industry consortium of broadcasters and advertisers) provides the most detailed data available on British TV audiences. Set up in 1981 to act as an organisation, independent of BBC or ITV companies, it provides weekly audience ratings. An electronic metre is attached to TV sets which monitors whether the set is switched on, when it is turned off and which channel is being viewed. Alternatively, a digital gadget is operated by the TV user. A controlled sample of 2,500 participate in this exercise. However, although we know how many million viewers, for example, 'Coronation Street' attracts, there still remains the problem of interpreting such numerical expressions of viewing behaviour. Even though BARB asks participants to complete self-report diaries and surveys to estimate 'appreciation indexes', these do not help us to imagine or perceive the realities of everyday life as they concern TV viewing.

The Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) offers more sophisticated examples of survey work on, for example, the use and impact of video on viewing in the home (Levy and Gunter, 1988) but they present their data with limited details about how the data was gathered, thereby making evaluation of their studies difficult. An inspection of the TV and video viewing diary used in their survey (obtained upon request from the IBA) highlights several problems. Its sheer bulk, (35 pages to cover one week's viewing) would be an immediate 'turn-off' for most, especially young, people in the absence of any significant motivation in completing them. Although care has been taken to explain what the diary is for and how to use it, it demands a level of literacy and skill in order to fill it in that one cannot simply assume (young) people would possess. In the early stages of planning, several attempts at using the diary method proved to be unsuccessful

since young people were not sufficiently motivated to complete them conscientiously.

Furthermore, the IBA's Time-Use Diary includes an appreciation index; a score from 0-10. Ten, the highest mark, means 'extremely enjoyable' or 'left an extremely strong impression', and 0, the reverse. I decided that this kind of appreciation index would be inappropriate since, even if a programme was found to be 'extremely enjoyable', one would not know why this was so, or, if an 'extremely strong impression' was made upon the viewer one would not know what kind of impression. Clearly, these kinds of questions are more geared to commercial interests. Examining the diary format, however, helped me to begin to distinguish what kinds of data could most usefully be collected through the survey method and helped adjust my aims and goals accordingly.

A questionnaire, used in a media survey among asians in Southall, conducted by the Harris Research Centre (1988) was also examined. Its aim was to assess the market for 'ethnic programming' but the parameters of the survey extended beyond media use to elicit perceptions of national identity and presumably link these to some notion of audience 'needs' or 'requirements'. For example, one question asked

"Which of these statement describe how you feel?

-I always feel I belong to this country

-Sometimes feel I belong to this country and sometimes I don't

-I Never feel I belong to this country".

In examining this type of question I realised the problems of identifying the frequency or otherwise of a feeling or action. The 'always', 'sometimes', 'never' grouping of responses seemed to be a fairly crude instrument of measurement which would later lead to problems of analysis. For example, how does one interpret the 'fact' that 'most people' say they 'sometimes feel they belong to this country and sometimes they don't'. This kind of statement lacks precision and is predictable. It would be more interesting to find out

what kinds of circumstances made them feel that they belonged or the reverse but this would be achieved more successfully through qualitative methods.

The survey covers a wide range of topics; use of video; time spent watching TV; channel preferences (including an index of satisfaction with the various channels); viewing of 'Asian' programming; convenience of scheduling; presentational style; content 'mix' and language of 'Asian' programmes. Respondents were also asked what kinds of programmes they would like to watch. A critical examination of this survey assisted me in identifying the kinds of questions aimed at assessing consumer satisfaction and requirements. In retrospect, this now seems obvious, but with limited experience of questionnaire design, one danger is to use the kinds of questions which are conventionally used for commercial purposes.

Therefore, examining these surveys helped to clarify the kinds of questions that it might be possible to ask and to think about ways of mobilising my research interests. However, I was aware that in constructing a questionnaire one already has an implicit theory of data construction whereby one is intuitively working out how people will respond to the triggers set.

Questionnaire design is itself a form of data construction, especially, if one sees the whole process of design as actually manipulating data. Yet, the traditional ethos of considers the survey as a way of gathering facts in a 'neutral' and 'value-free' way according to a ritualistic procedure. Since one is always selective, including and excluding certain considerations, one cannot produce any definitive factual accuracy.

Certain types of questions seemed to pose problems in these surveys; questions aimed at eliciting data on the temporal and contextual dimensions of television use in family through the survey seemed especially problematic. Also, it was difficult to decide on how to frame questions in terms of their level of generality or specificity.

Surveys on television use often include questions designed to assess how much time is spent viewing. Self-reported estimates are often inaccurate. Heavy viewers, in particular, tend to under-report the amount of time spent viewing. (Collet and Lamb, 1986) This, coupled with the problems of estimating an average amount of time spent viewing led me to conclude that the figures would be no more reliable than those widely available which have already established that, on average, young people watch approximately 25 hours per week. (Lusted, 1986) The differences between heavy and light viewers would best be investigated qualitatively

It is also difficult to obtain accurate data on the contextual aspects of viewing. 'Synchronic' data about what is watched, when, with whom, and for how long, would be difficult to elicit through a questionnaire. The self-report diary is a more appropriate technique in this regard. But even the self report diary would need to be backed up with observational or interview data in order to document the variability involved in the activity, simply described as, watching TV. Viewing experiences cannot be divorced from the domestic setting and from the dynamics of family life. (Morley, 1986; Gray, 1988) Domestic authority and control are often played out through decision making processes concerning what, when, where, with whom and even how to watch. But decision making is a complex process and control over viewing will vary at different times of the day or week. A certain family grouping might have watched a programme but did they choose to do so? What does choice mean in a family? How is it negotiated? Which programmes did they actively choose? why? Clearly many of these questions cannot be asked in a survey. It is clear that a person's, or indeed a family's, uses of TV is impossible to investigate by survey methods alone.

Finally, the framing of questions proved to be obstinately difficult in terms of whether to elicit general or specific data. In other words, should one ask about what one usually does or what one did last week or last night? Given that the comparability of data would become problematic if I enquired about 'last night's' viewing, (since not all

respondents would complete the questionnaire on the same day) it was then decided to ask about viewing in the last week. Should one name specific programmes/films as being representative of genres or specific genres? Or, should I leave the question open-ended and thus risk slowing down the whole process of administering the questionnaire and later confronting the problems of encoding the data? Asking about favourite programmes also proved problematic in that one is assuming that respondents have favourite programmes. In any case what is favoured is contingent upon so many factors and thus may vary according to their mood, the time of day or week or the company that one is in.

The review of these and other surveys assisted in the formulation and framing of questions and led to a realisation that the kinds of questions that could usefully be asked about TV use were much more limited than I had first thought. A rule of thumb set of questions guided the formulation of survey questions.

- will I get a truthful answer?
- is the question straightforward, simple, direct?
- is it appropriate for respondent's age and experience?
- is the language and framing of the question appropriate for respondent's age and experience?
- is the question making any assumptions?
- how can it be informed by my qualitative data?
- how does the data to be obtained relate to my broader research interests?
- what kind of writing can I envisage after I have obtained the data?

As, already stated, the survey was a collaborative project. I devised the media questions, (questions 5, 18, 19, 24-51, 55, 58, 62,-65) and we devised Section 1 (on personal background) and Section 2 on (parental background) together. The remaining questions were devised by my colleague. The questionnaire was piloted three times before arriving at the final version.

I shall focus here on explaining the rationale behind the media questions and deal with the social background questions in the sample profile section of this chapter. (See questionnaire)

Question 5 is aimed at eliciting broad leisure patterns

Question 18 decisions and preferences regarding leisure can only be appreciated against the background of parent's rule-making. The list is based upon informal enquiries among students. In particular, the regulation of TV viewing in terms of times to start and stop watching TV, as well as, censorship of sex or violence and video use can be set in the context of other rules.

Question 19 points to whether homework was interrupted by television or video viewing (the question could equally have been asked the other way round.)

Question 24 This question is necessary as a starting point as patterns of media consumption are obviously related to equipment in the home.

Question 25 The location of TV equipment is important as it indicates the possibilities for individual as opposed to group viewing and immediately affects the choices available to members of the household.

Question 26 This question gives an indication of young people's perception of control over viewing as exercised through the remote control.

Question 27 - 29 These questions give an indication of the technical competence of various age groups and of any gender differences in the ability to use the video timer switch in, for example, the interests of uninterrupted homework or scheduled leisure pursuits; actual use and typical use can then be compared.

Question 30 - 31 The question elicits perceptions of channel preference or loyalty as part of both parent's and young people's viewing. In the pilot students protested that it was impossible to give only one preference and so the option of two choices was given.

Question 32 The question offers diagnostic indications of generic preferences as they relate to films (on video) and some indication of 'mainstream/commercial' versus 'minority/art' films. Such data could then be correlated with channel preference to give an idea of cultural aspirations. Responses may also be suggestive of 'cultural capital'.

The results will be correlated with variables such as age and gender.

Question 33-36 These questions elicit patterns of generic preferences as they relate to TV and offer the necessary distinction between actual viewing, family viewing and family communication about TV consumption. Q.36 indicates which types of programmes young people would prefer to watch without elders. This is based on previous interview data. Taken together 33-36 establish broad viewing patterns.

Questions 37 and 38 Based on the interview data, these questions aim at eliciting student's involvement with 'Indian' videos and the reasons for liking or disliking them.

Question 39 The question establishes how far young people watch programmes specifically aimed at ethnic minorities. The list is based on informal discussion among students.

Questions 40 and 41 TV use needs to be situated within broader leisure pursuits and use of other media. This question gives an indication of radio station preferences, with particular reference to local radio.

Questions 42 - 47 This section on video use is based on previous interview data and aims at assessing how far previous results can be generalised. They indicate patterns of video hire and consumption and thus the family, rather than the individual is considered as the unit of consumption. Some assessment of young people's involvement in family viewing of video can be established in Q. 44. Patterns of video use can then be related to educational and leisure pursuits

Question 45 offers the possibility of comparing informal networks of video exchange with commercial ones.

Question 46 and 47 documents details about respondents' home video libraries.

Question 48 and 49 These questions indicate the take-up of cable and satellite and give data on channel and programme preferences.

Question 50 and 51 These indicate preferred viewing as opposed to actual viewing and thus give data on young people's, rather than on their families, as TV consumers.

Question 55 concerns music preferences and is based on a list established in earlier informal enquiries

Question 58 indicates choice of stylistic role models

Question 62 concerns reading habits including magazines.

Question 63 enquires as to the country respondents would most like to visit and perceptions of that country

Question 64 enquires as to positive and negative perceptions of England and USA. The USA was chosen since young people seem to be remarkably influenced by American media and styles which often provide a common model of convergence among students of different 'ethnic' backgrounds.

Supported by qualitative data these questions may shed some insights on broader questions of 'media imperialism' or the extent to which perceptions of a country may be shaped by TV

Question 69 and 70 aims at eliciting more specific information about reading especially of newspapers and magazines, number of books in the home as a further index of social class.

1.3 GAINING ACCESS

In this section the problems encountered in gaining access to schools for the purpose of conducting the survey are described. It took four months, several meetings and lengthy correspondence to receive permission (of a highly controlled and qualified nature) to conduct the survey, by which time we had sought alternative means and had already administered it to local young people. In this section, an outline of this process of negotiation is given, not only because it represented a significant stumbling block to the research, but also because it highlights, more generally, the tricky nature of negotiating access to public institutions.

Initially, the aim was to administer the questionnaire in all three of Southall's High Schools to a sample, selected randomly from each year group. However, such early ambitions were soon dashed upon realising the difficulties involved in obtaining local authority permission to conduct the survey. A letter seeking permission to conduct the survey was sent to the local Chief Education Officer on 28.2.89. Three weeks later we received a letter of refusal from the Assistant Education Officer (AEO)

"It is not the habit or custom of the authority to grant permission to the large number of students seeking to conduct research in the

borough. I therefore regret to inform you....."

Refusing to be deterred at this early stage, I sought support from my supervisor, Roger Silverstone, who wrote a letter on our behalf asking the AEO to reconsider the refusal. We also wrote a letter making, what we felt to be, a solid case for proceeding with the research. We sent him a copy of the draft questionnaire requesting a meeting to discuss it with him. This was reciprocated with an invitation to meet. An appointment with the assistant education officer was then made for the 4. 4. 89.

The meeting with the AEO, which lasted 1 hour 30 minutes, can only be described as an intensive grilling of our aims and intentions: Why should we in particular be considered as an exception to the borough's practice? Why Southall? What did we personally want out of it? All reasonable and fair questions. However, in the course of the interview it became clear that his key purpose was to establish whether the survey might elicit responses that could be critical of the schools or LEA and/or responses that might be politically contentious.

As an equal opportunities borough questions of 'race' and gender were high on their agenda. At the interview we were questioned on how we would deal with the categorisation of ethnic minorities. We told the AEO that we intended to use a variety of indices including religion, language and parental background, as appropriate. This resulted in the AEO insisting that, should we be allowed to conduct the survey, we use the borough's formulae; Black/Asian; Black/Carribean; Black/African; Western/European. Tactfully, we suggested that such categories might not be sufficiently sensitive indices and that a more subtle and complex range of indices, including religion, might avoid simplistic stereotypical grouping and provide more nuanced results. Thereupon, the AEO elaborated upon the borough's policy and the politics of categorising 'ethnic minorities'. The extreme sensitivity among 'members of the community' to questions of religion, we were told, had to be born in mind. Using religious distinctions might only 'inflame community conflict'. His fear was that the survey could be used to

support arguments for separate schooling in the borough, particularly among Sikhs and Muslims, which were current at that time.

He then went on to outline a set of further requirements. He requested that a written, well-reasoned argument was to be presented justifying the following before any decision could be made:

- why should we be given access to pupils during school time?
- how would questionnaire itself would dovetail into the curriculum?
- how would the research benefit to the LEA ?

Given that the education authority already had a databank on all pupils, including demographic variables, he failed to see the need for the kinds of demographic questions which we were asking. He then outlined research in three areas which the borough was conducting and emphasised that our research should not overlap in these areas. He asked for a detailed, written justification of each question in the questionnaire, by the following Monday. (The meeting was held on the previous Thursday) Before we left the office he mentioned that we should also be aware that the LEA would retain copyright of any published material.

Six weeks later (26th. May 1989 and 3 months after our first letter) a letter arrived which, in view of the delicacy of the matter, has not been included but from which exerpts have been taken for the purposes of highlighting the difficulties of gaining access

"Thank you for your letter dated 9 April. Without prejudice and as an exception to the custom and practice of this authority, I am pleased to inform you that I am prepared 'in principle' to agree to your request to administer the questionnaire that you have copied for me.

My agreement is conditional as follows:

- i) that the formal written approval of the Heads and the Governing Bodies of the three High Schools be sought in the first instance
- ii) that the individual consent of the parents of pupils to be surveyed be obtained before administering the questionnaire

- iii) that no disruption to the curriculum provision made by the school for pupils,
- iv) that no supply teacher or cover be provided by the authority and/or any other costs incurred (they didnt realise that I was not a full time teacher);
- v) that a copy of the draft research report be available for comment by me and that these, if any, be acted upon at my request;
- vi) that no direct or indirectly attributable adverse comments or criticism be made of the Authority in any reports in writing or orally;
- vii) that the authority be referred to as an 'outer London Borough LEA'
- viii) a copy of the final report be deposited with the Authority, and its authors meet with such senior officers as I may determine in order to disseminate the results of the research
- ix) that these conditions be agreed by the researchers prior to any initial contact with head teachers.

We did not think it was in the interests of our research to conform to some of these regulations, not to mention the delay that adhering to such tight specifications would further add to our research schedule. Thus, we were unable to conduct the survey in the three High Schools. However, with the permission of the Head teacher and Board of Governor's in the school where I was a part-time member of staff, we were able to conduct the survey with the assistance of teachers and students 'in their own time' and 'subject to their consent', thus, circumventing the borough's stringent requirements.

I was later told by a former colleague, then working at the Education Office that the reason the LEA only allowed research which it, itself, had privately commissioned from 'independent' companies was because of a public uproar, a few years previous to this request, due to a 'fly-on-the-wall' TV documentary which represented one of the schools in the borough in such a bad light that the school was eventually closed. There was also the case of a student teacher who conducted a survey on the sexual habits of Asian teenagers which caused a furore among parents (not to mention streams of unreliable data from the students)

and almost resulted in the dismissal of several members of staff. This had proved most embarrassing for the borough's education office and, in part, explains their reluctance to grant permission.

1.4 ADMINISTERING THE SURVEY

As the questionnaire was very long some of the weaker readers might easily tire if left to complete it themselves so it was decided that the whole questionnaire should be read aloud. Further, it would keep the class together and make it a 'fun' whole group activity and help to ensure good completion rates. As a part-time teacher with easier access to the school, it was decided that I should administer it. Also, the use of one person might help eliminate distortions through the adoption of a standard mode of delivery.

The sample was selected according to age and gender. In this sense it could be termed a random stratified sample; stratified according to year group but randomly selected within each group. We did not set out to follow the path of 'ethnic determinism' but set out to study young people's activities and attitudes without making assumptions about 'community', class or ethnicity. Rather we considered that whatever differences emerged which related to ethnicity, religion and class would show themselves validly across the dimensions of age and gender. Thus the approach adopted was to treat all young people in one town as such and to differentiate, in the first instance, according to age and gender and then apply whatever pre-conceived variables we had derived from either the literature or fieldwork across these categories.

Of the 333 students who completed the questionnaire, the vast majority did so co-operatively, without complaint and appeared to enjoy it. They were given full details of the purpose of the questionnaire (see front sheet of questionnaire in appendix) and the idea that their views and opinions were being taken into account seemed to motivate them to complete the questionnaire diligently.

The questionnaire took 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete depending on the aptitude of the class and rhythm set. Usually one sought to

establish a good rhythm allowing enough time for the meaning of the question to penetrate, but not too long, so as to obtain spontaneous responses. But obviously the rhythm was varied according to the nature of the question giving a little more time when necessary. There is a dynamic which is set in motion by the action of ticking and the spontaneity upon which it depends. One student declared 'it gives you a good buzz'. Others saw it as a challenge and enjoyed the satisfaction of completing it.

In fact, there were few adverse comments upon completion. Some found several of the questions, especially about place of worship and details of parent's backgrounds too personal. Others criticised it for being biased toward Asians, especially the video questions. However, most reported that they found it 'easy' because 'all you had to do was tick the boxes'. From the pilot questionnaires it was discovered that open-ended questions which require students to write can deter even the keenest of respondents. For this reason, such questions were kept to a bare minimum. However, at times, it was noticeable that students felt under some pressure to keep up with their peers and they frequently monitored each other's skill or aptitude in 'keeping the pace'. When students were observed struggling to 'keep up', the pace was slowed down, but this rarely allowed others sufficient time to look over their shoulders at how their neighbour was responding. Since students tend to sit in friendship groupings in class, there was some, although minimal, opportunity to communicate with each other while completing it. So whilst my observations would lead me to believe that the questions requiring ticks were done individually, the more open-ended questions were probably subject to some negotiation. (An interesting observation was made by the person who input much of the data regarding favourite stars. He claimed, and I later observed it to be correct, that the younger respondents who were seated in friendship groupings (and often of the same religion) shared the same 'favourite stars'). Whenever possible, at the end of each session, I asked for feedback.

1.5 USING THE STATISTICAL PACKAGE FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES(SPSS)

SPSS is a data base system which can be used in a wide range of social science research projects. It is popular for its flexibility, accuracy, reliability and speed. It is 'user-friendly' and allows many options beyond simple frequencies, for example, cross-tabulation, charts and diagrams. The language and commands are relatively easy to learn and much of it is self-explanatory. It is particularly useful for large scale surveys because it is possible to mount large data files. It allows for efficient storage, saving and it is easy to access.

Two work-placement students assisted us in inputting the data since, we ourselves, would never have been able to do so in the time available. Inputting the data is extremely time consuming. (It took approximately 600+ hours) The responses have to be coded according to mathematical variables and this presented a problem for some of the open-ended questions which proved enormously difficult to code since, often, they did not fall into any patterns. Also, with the coding of parent's occupation, problems arose because some respondents gave the place or the name of the company instead of their parent's occupation. Thus, in some cases, we had to make inferences about which socio-economic grouping to place responses in. This was assisted by our knowledge of local industries and employers but a margin of error must be acknowledged in relation to the data on socio-economic groupings. Therefore, despite the enormous investment of time required to input the data, and the problems encountered with open-ended questions, SPSS proved to be an efficient and effective computer package.

2.0 SAMPLE PROFILE

In this section, details of the age, gender, religious background and occupational aspirations of respondents is given alongside social and cultural information about their parents.

2.1 AGE

The valid sample, comprising those between the ages of 12 and 18, is composed as follows:

<u>AGE</u>	<u>BOYS</u>	<u>GIRLS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
12	22	18	40
13	33	32	65
14	32	35	67
15	22	24	46
16	18	33	51
17	28	19	47
18	13	4	17
	----	----	----
	168	165	333

2.2 GENDER

As can be seen girls are over-represented at age 16 and under-represented at ages 17 and 18.

FEMALES	165
MALES	168

TOTAL	333

2.3 RELIGION

The following figures give the religious composition of the sample, as reported in this survey, compared with those of a survey conducted among 771 pupils in the same local high school in April of the same year (1989). These illustrate that the balance of religions in the survey is representative of the area. The figures show that Sikhs represent over 50% of respondents. It is also apparent that 80% of respondents are either Sikh, Hindu or Muslim.

	<u>Survey</u>	<u>School</u>
	%	%
Sikh	51.3	56.2
Hindu	16.1	20.2
Muslim	14.9	14.0
Christian	7.6	7.6

Other	4.8	0.1
Mixed	0.6	
	N=333	N=771

It follows that the statistics concerned are best evidenced in the case of Sikhs due to their greater strength in numbers. Among Sikhs however, it is important to take account here, and in many of the following analyses, of the role of caste. While caste was originally a Hindu notion not shared by Sikhism in its earlier manifestations (1517 ff) and is doctrinally incompatible with the Koranic principles of Muslims, the circumstances in the Panjab, in East africa and, indeed, in the U.K have favoured a resurgence of the caste idea among Sikh populations. On the whole, it may be safely assumed that Southall 'caught up' with this trend after the immigration of mainly East African born Panjabis of the three castes of Tarkhan, Lohar and Raj (carpenters, blacksmiths and bricklayers) from East Africa.

That religion is one of the most potent criteria of distinction among Southall residents will be clear time and again from the figures that follow. In order to understand the internal dynamics of each religious category however, sub-divisions within each religious group are necessary. Qualitative research has shown that these sub-divisions are of a different nature in each category. Among Sikhs, caste differences have assumed, an almost paradoxically, greater importance than among Hindu congregations where cleavages, mainly on the basis of recognised mother tongue prevail. Among Muslim congregations cleavages of regional origin are pre-eminent.

2.4 SIKH DIVISIONS: CASTE AND COUNTRY OF BIRTH

Places of worship

<u>Gurudwara</u>	<u>Father</u>		<u>Mother</u>	
	No.	%	No.	%
Havelock Road	57	56.44	61	57.55
Park Avenue	9	8.91	7	6.60
Oswald Road	17	16.83	19	17.92
Clifton Road	4	3.96	5	4.72
Featherstone Road	1	0.99	1	0.94
Western Road	11	10.98	11	10.38
Other	2	1.98	2	1.89
	Total 101		Total 106	

The main cleavage among Sikhs, all of whom speak Punjabi, is caste. The data on the use of temples highlights the predominance of the Jat Sikh caste in Southall. Of the valid sample among Sikh fathers, 65% worship in gurudwaras (temples) mainly frequented by the Jat caste. (The figures combine those attending Havelock Rd. and Park Avenue, thus 66 out of 101 and the figure is 64% for mothers) Traditionally, Jats are the landowners and cultivators. They originate from the rural villages of the Punjab where they are considered to be 'top' in the caste hierarchy.

Of the valid Sikh sample, 20.79% of fathers and 22.64% of mothers, worship in Ramgharia Gurudwaras (cf. Oswald Road; Clifton Rd.). Traditionally, the Ramgharia castes include craftsmen, for example, carpenters. 12.87% of the valid sample of Sikh fathers and 11.32 of Sikh mothers worship in the Ravi Das Gurudwara (Western Rd.) The Ravi Das congregation combines 'low' caste Sikhs (chure and chamars, who also worship at Featherstone Rd gurudwara) who frequently have greater affinities with Hinduism than with Sikhism, alongside Hindus who follow the teachings of guru Ravi Das. The percentages for mother's place of usual worship do not differ significantly except that they show a marginally higher response to the question about place of regular worship.

Methodologically, it may be useful to state that membership of a caste may be claimed or disclaimed in various contexts and that the question was therefore framed as an enquiry about the usual gurudwara of worship rather than as caste as such. This answered to two necessities; the first, to a certain amount of discretion about caste allegiance which was felt to be owed to informants and secondly, to an operative rather than a normative criteria of caste affiliation.

2.5 BRITISH-BORN AND EAST AFRICAN BORN PARENTS

The proportion of Ramgharia Sikhs corresponds to the proportion of Sikhs who have lived in East Africa: 20% for fathers (21 out of 101) and 14% (15 out of 106) for mothers. It should be noted that the distinctiveness of Sikhs hailing from East Africa, first shown rather forcefully by Bhachu (1986), is represented no more strongly than the presence, by now, of Sikh parents who, according to their children's information, have 'always lived in the United Kingdom'; 35% of the valid sample had British born parents (36 out of 207). No doubt this balance will change in favour of British born parents in the course of time. I consider it lucky that the sample was taken at a time when Bhachu's conclusions are still relevant, yet need to be re-balanced against the rapid demographic transitions in this 'generationally imbalanced' area.

2.6 INTERNAL DIVISIONS AMONG HINDUS AND MUSLIMS

The main cleavage among Hindus is that of region and, as a consequence language. Just under 50% (16 out of 32) of all parents are evidenced as speakers of Panjabi and 34% (11 out of 32) as speakers of Hindi (which comprises the most highly school educated group of parents). Against these the minority consists of 15% Gujarati speakers.

Among Muslims, regional differences cover a wide geographical area which does not lend itself to systematic divisions (i.e. there is an overlap between the Pakistan and the Indian Punjab). However, the main cleavage is between Muslims from Pakistan, the Punjab, East Africa, and Mirpur on the Kashmir border. The overwhelming majority of Muslim parents are reported to have come from Pakistan (60% or 35 out of 58

but if one includes the wider Punjab the figure rises to 82% or 48 out of 58). Only 11% of Muslim fathers and 4% of Muslim mothers have come from the mainly urban settlements of East Africa; yet only 4% and 7%, respectively, originate from the very poor and deprived region of Kashmir. (There is certainly some under-representation of Mirpuris in the figures). There are significant internal cleavages between those adults who have lived in the urban centre Lahore and those who have lived in the Mirpur District of Kashmir and those who have lived in Bangladesh

The statistical representation cannot claim, accurately to reflect the composition of Southall's Muslim population, and nor can the census figures. Two things, however, are worth keeping in mind; first, the Muslim congregation is more likely to be divided on regional lines than any other Asian congregation; secondly, these cleavages are not always visible to the outsider, given their marginalisation in the political, demographic and religious balances prevailing in the town.

2.7 RURAL/URBAN BACKGROUND AMONG PARENTS

Of the valid sample (N=81) 50% of parents come from a village, 32% from a town and 18% from a city. More accurate data might have been collected if only two categories, rural as opposed to urban, had been used. Whilst the data on village and city background is likely to be unambiguous, and therefore reliable, the potential for confusing a town with either a large semi-rural village or city makes this data more dubious in accuracy. However, within the religious categories among Asians it is useful to note the differing influences of rural as opposed to urban backgrounds (which has further consequences for conceptions of tradition and modernity more generally) Among Sikhs, of the valid sample (N=100) 59% reported that their father and 59% their mother (N=103) had lived in a village. This concurs with the predominance of Jat Sikhs who, are most likely to come from villages in rural Punjab. 42% of the valid sample of Hindu respondents (N=38) reported that their father and 42% (N=26) that their mother was born in a village. Among Muslims, the same figures applied to mother and father (36% N=30).

Given the qualitative research, these data, indicating a similar likelihood of village birth for Hindu and Muslim parents and a far greater one for Sikhs, may be misleading. While the Sikh sample (which has just over 100 valid cases), is probably reliable, the samples for Hindus and Muslims might possibly fail to reflect the large number of rural born Mirpuri parents. It is most reliable therefore to keep in mind the high percentage of rurally born parents heading Sikh and, I surmise, Hindu and Muslim households and to note the extraordinary proximity of families from rural and urban backgrounds in Southall.

2.8 OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

Over two-thirds of the respondents aspire to a better occupation than their parents.

Higher	106	71.62%
Same	35	23.65%
Lower	7	4.73%

Aspirations toward upward social mobility, greater earning power and improved status are common reasons for emigration in the first place. Therefore, these figures are hardly surprising. Yet they can only be understood in relation to the actual occupational position of parents and their own educational potential.

2.9 PARENTAL OCCUPATION

<u>Father's job n=306</u>			<u>Mother's job n=263</u>		
	No.	%		No.	%
Retired	1	0.3%	Retired	7	2.6%
Professional (1)	19	6.2%	Professional (1)	3	1.1%
Professional (2)	24	7.8%	Professional (2)	10	3.8%
Skilled	62	20.3%	Skilled	44	16.7%
Semi-skilled	78	25.5%	Semi-skilled	25	9.5%
Manual	114	37.3%	Manual	99	37.6%
Unemployed	6	1.9%	Housewife	74	28.1%
Deceased	2	0.6%	Deceased	1	0.3%
Total 306			Total 263		

For both men and women the main occupations are manual and the second biggest grouping for men is in the semi-skilled group whilst for women it is housewife. Despite the small figures, it is perhaps worth noting that there are twice as many men in category Professional (2) as women and six times more in Professional (1). 45.8% of fathers as compared with only 26.2% of mothers are employed in skilled and semi-skilled employment while an almost equal percentage of fathers 37.3% and mothers 37.6% are employed in manual jobs. 39.36% of all mothers, where death or lack of data did not prevent inclusion, are in employment.

The class structure is, thus, quite probably anomolous in comparison to similar sized British towns. It shows the co-residence, in the same quarter ('ghettoisation'), of a very broad cross-section. This is no doubt due to the limitations on outward migration from Southall. This will be apparent also from the data on family structure detailed below. Within Southall, a more telling distinction might, therefore, be that between families with parental backgrounds of birth in a village, town or city.

It is unclear how or to what extent parental occupation influences aspirations among young people and certainly other factors such as educational achievement and peer culture need to be considered. However, the table below, despite the low response rate, gives some idea of job aspirations and assists us in assessing the stereotypicality of the choices made.

3.3. POPULAR ASPIRATIONS AMONG BOYS AND GIRLS

<u>BOYS</u>			<u>GIRLS</u>		
<u>Job Title</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>percent</u>	<u>Job Title</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>percent</u>
Computing	8	11.27	Nursing	2	2.20
Accountancy	5	7.04	Teaching	6	6.60
Business	9	12.68	Air Hostess	12	13.19
Engineering	10	14.08	Medicine	4	4.40
Medicine	5	7.04	Secretary	5	5.50
Banking	1	1.41	Lawyer	11	12.09
Other	33	46.48	Other	51	56.04
Totals	71		Totals	91	

The low response to the question is significant in itself. Many young people, certainly in the schools in which I taught in Southall, often do not possess a clear or idea of their educational performance in relation to others. A few have highly ambitious, and some, very unrealistic, aspirations. Therefore, before the age of 16, unless one has a clear cut career in mind, it is often difficult to conceive of what one might do. For many students, it comes as a shock when they fail (or get low grades) in their GCSE's (as the majority do, since only approximately 20% proceed to A'level study in the school where the survey was conducted) and thus have to re-adjust their ambitions and goals. I have also found that among low or under achieving female students aged 16, there is a strong tendency toward stereotypical female occupations such as nursery nursing, clerical or secretarial jobs and training.

2.11 HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND FAMILY STRUCTURE

COMMENSALITY

The number of people eating in a household gives a broad indication of size of household. On a normal day, 68.2% of the valid sample (N=365) had eating groups of between 4 and 6. Remarkable is that eating groups

of 3 (7.4%) are no more common than eating groups of 7 (9.86%) and 8 (6.3%). The figures nevertheless indicate slightly larger family size than among the wider population in Britain. Over one third (35%) of households have between 6 and 8 people eating there on a regular basis.

One in five of respondents had either an uncle (N=44) or an aunt (N=31) in their daily eating groups and just over one in ten of the valid sample had grandparents who eat with them (N=37). This would suggest that the prevalence of extended families applies not only to the eating patterns of individual households but predominantly to the larger patterns of settlement - the sample reflects the concentration of relatives living 'in or near' Southall; a consequence both of chain migration and, more recently, a limited degree of geographic mobility outside certain favoured areas in the immediate vicinity.

UNMARRIED BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Over 8 in 10 respondents have between 1 and 4 unmarried brothers and sisters living in the household. The figures, however, ignore the number of married brothers and their wives who, according to custom, may also live in the household. Whilst the custom of the boy taking his wife to live with in-laws is declining slowly as more couples establish independent households within the wider family system, the practice is nevertheless common and therefore the following figures need to be considered in this light.

<u>No. of brothers and sisters</u>	<u>No. reporting</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
0	14	7.2
1	36	18.56
2	56	28.87
3	39	20.10
4	27	13.92
5	12	8.19
6	9	4.65
7	1	0.52

2.12 KINSHIP NETWORKS

GRANPARENTS LIVING IN OR NEAR SOUTHALL

Over one third (35.57%) of Sikh respondents (N=194) had grandparents living in or near Southall. 28.8% of Hindu respondents (13 out of 45) and 19.1% of Muslims (9 out of 26) also reported having grandparents living in or near Southall. Despite these religious differences, the average was 34.36% of young people who had grandparents in the area.

<u>Religion</u>	<u>Number Reporting</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Sikh	69/194	35.57
Hindu	13/45	28.89
Muslim	9/47	19.15

COUSINS LIVING IN OR NEAR SOUTHALL

It is striking that nearly 34% of respondents have more than 10 cousins living in or near Southall. Less than 2 in 10 respondents have no cousins nearby. Again this indicates the the very high density of kin living locally.

<u>No. of cousins</u>	<u>No. reporting</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
0	63	18.92
1-5	99	29.73
5-10	58	17.42
More than 10	113	33.93%
TOTAL	333	

3.0 LIVING IN SOUTHALL

Southall is an area of remarkable cultural diversity. One of the aims of the thesis is to examine how young people respond to and negotiate this cultural diversity through their TV talk. However, we need first of all to understand their criteria of cultural distinctions.

3.1 YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEFINITIONS OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY

The question on cultural diversity was open ended (see p.11 of questionnaire). It aimed at eliciting the criteria most commonly used by youth in order to delineate what they understand by different 'cultures'. The results show that religion is categorically the most significant marker of cultural distinction in Southall.

<u>Criteria of distinction</u>	<u>occurring in % of questionnaires</u>	<u>absolute numbers</u>
Religion (e.g. Sikh, Hindu)	75.07%	235/313
Religious ritual (e.g. Diwali, Christmas)	8.01%	25/312
Nationality (e.g. Indian, British)	31.30%	98/312
Region within a country (e.g. Punjab)	10.57%	33/312
A named sub-culture (e.g. Rasta)	8.97%	28/312

It is striking that three quarters of all questionnaires contained a classification of cultures by religion, increased further by those responses, mainly from younger children, who name a religious festival or ritual as a marker of cultural distinction. It is also striking that national, regional and sub-cultural labels should serve as relatively widespread definitions of culture. This becomes clearer when compared to

popular usage of the terms 'Afro-Carribean', 'Asian' and 'British'. The entries for these and similar terms is as follows

<u>Term used</u>	<u>in percentage of</u> <u>questionnaires</u>	<u>absolute figures</u>
"Caribbean"	15.11%	47/311
"Asian"	14.10%	44/312
"Indian"	11.86%	37/312
"Black"	6.75%	21/311
"British"	6.43%	20/311
"White"	4.50%	14/311

Whilst "Caribbean", "Asian" and "Indian" are used as blanket terms they are far less common than distinctions based on religious differences. "British" and "white" occur remarkably seldom (although the Punjabi equivalent for white 'gori' (female) or 'gora' (male) are in widespread everyday usage locally as are 'kala' and 'kali' for black). No clear gender differences emerged in terms reported. However, a clear pattern emerged among older teenage males, in their more frequent use of the term 'nationality'.

3.2 PERCEPTIONS OF SOUTHALL

The data presented in this section gives insights into young people's perceptions of Southall predominantly as a 'close knit community' where no secrets can be kept. Respondents were asked to tick those statements with which they agreed. (refer to question 61 p.35 of questionnaire)

Statements

	Number	%
Southall is too isolated, it's like an island	14/31	45.16
Every community in Southall is like an island	4/31	12.90
Everybody watches what everybody is doing here	125/182	68.68
My community is like an island in Southall	31/179	17.32

Nothing in Southall can be kept secret	132/179	73.74
Not all communities are getting a fair deal	65/173	37.57

There is a clear consensus of response and a remarkable symmetry among females and males to the question aimed at eliciting perceptions of Southall. Of the 99 females respondents, 74% reported that 'Nothing in Southall can be kept a secret'. This response was echoed with among boys. Of the 81 male respondents 74% agreed with this statement. The second statement which most young people agreed with was 'Everybody watches everybody else in Southall' 69% of females and 70% of males reported this to be the case.

Thereafter, there is a sharp decline in the figures 37% of females and 38% of males reported that 'Not all communities are getting a fair deal'. 16% of females consider 'My community is an island' as compared with 19% of males. Similarly 19% of males state that 'Southall is too isolated . It is like an island', as compared with 12% of females.

These figures are surprising for the convergence of opinion between males and females on the lack of secrecy and suggest an almost voyeuristic quality attached to local life. Prior to these results I would have thought that the isolated and self-contained nature of life in Southall would have featured more prominently in responses. But it is a sense of 'exposure' due to the lack of anonymity which is seen as most significant. This arises due to the density of kinship and friendship networks contained within this small geographic area. Such observations would also be typical among small town or village, rural dwellers. Given the predominantly rural background of (Jat) Sikhs, and their regional proximity in the Punjab, it would not be surprising if the patterns and styles of social networking and interaction were re-produced in Southall.

Furthermore, given the strong attachment to 'biraderie', (brotherhood or solidarity), especially among Sikhs and Muslims and the mutual support given among friends and family in the early days of settlement, these

bonds of loyalty between families must have been considerably strengthened (the obverse side of that is clearly competitiveness, which is also rife). One needs to appreciate this in order to understand the nature of the restrictions which young people have to contend with. It has often been reported to me that a girl will be in dispute with her parents because she has been seen with a boy on the High Street. This boy may be someone in her class with whom she can converse with freely in a school context. However, on the street such interaction would generally be frowned on.

"you might be walking down the High Street and meet a boy from school you might stand there talking to him for two minutes and before you get home for tea your mum will know about it".

(16 year old girl in a discussion on living in Southall)

A girl's reputation must be impeccable if she is to marry successfully but the gossip networks are so intense that it takes little for her reputation to be tarnished. Although a boy's reputation is not so easily 'sullied' the, too, are subject to informal surveillance

"its a town with a thousand eyes and they're all peeping at you from behind curtains, across the street, from a car, from a bus stop, anywhere you go in Southall you're bound to bump into someone and often you're not in the right place at the right time, you know what I mean".
(17 year old boy during discussion on living in Southall).

But one must be cautious not to exaggerate this point for such concern is mainly expressed in relation to cross gender socialising in public. The degree of familiarity which local people share also bears the advantages in terms of friendliness and social contact. This, I think, is reflected in the very low figures relating to the perceived isolation of Southall. Southall is often seen, especially by 'outsiders' as an isolated place. Its distinctiveness (usually meaning its high concentration of 'Asian' inhabitants) from the surrounding towns is generally understood as isolation or 'ghettoisation'.

3.3 GOING OUTSIDE SOUTHALL

In the last month have you been to any of these places? (N=152)

	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>
Outside Southall with family	63%	51%
Outside Southall without family	44%	43%
Outside Southall with friends	48%	56%
Outside Southall alone	26%	35%

51% of boys and 63% of girls had been outside Southall with their family. For males as they get older the incidence of such trips decrease, for example, at age 12, 86% of boys had been outside Southall with their family as compared with only 33% at age 17. As boys get older they experience a greater degree of independence and freedom of movement. The reverse is true for girls. The figures for 'going outside Southall with family' also decline steadily for females with age (age 12 - 87%; age 15 - 54%) but then there is a sudden increase at age 16 (65%) indicating, yet again, the greater degree of parental control over their daughters at this age.

Visits outside Southall without family are less frequent for both boys and girls. Only 43% of boys and 44% of girls had been outside Southall without their family in the month preceeding the questionnaire. The optimum age for trips outside Southall without family is age 16 for boys and girls. 50% of boys and 52% of girls had done so. It is interesting to note the high incidence of visits without family among 16 year old boys and girls alike seems to suggest that 16 year olds may be meeting or 'dating' eachother outside Southall. (Certainly, ethnographic data would support such an interpretation of the figures).

Across the age range more boys went on trips outside Southall with friends (56%) than girls (48%). The category 'without family' could have been dispensed with since 'with friends' or 'alone' would have sufficed to elicit the nature of the trip. Relatively few young people went outside Southall alone although the figures were considerably higher

than I had expected. 35% of males and 26% of girls had been outside Southall alone. One also needs to be cautious with interpreting the term 'outside Southall'. It may refer to Hayes, Uxbridge or any other nearby town and to the houses of relatives or close friends of the family for which parental constraints would only operate loosely. Ethnographic data points to a certain insularity and lack of mobility beyond the immediate vicinity of Southall among many young people in Southall. The figures seem to bear this out in relation to approximately half of respondents.

3.4 SOCIAL DIVISIONS AND COHESION

The results highlight young people's perceptions of what divides young people and what divides adults in Southall. Data is also presented on what they consider unites young people in Southall.

WHAT DIVIDES YOUNG PEOPLE IN SOUTHALL

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
religion	103/186	55.38
culture	102/186	54.84
racism	88/186	47.31
class	73/186	39.25
race	68/186	36.56
competition	67/186	36.02
school	67/186	36.02
parents	64/185	34.60
money	62/186	33.33
fear	54/186	29.03
politics	25/185	15.68
media	20/186	10.75

There was a significant convergence of opinion among females and males who reported that religion and culture were most divisive (59% and 54% respectively). The results for the rest of the list are very similar for males and females except for racism and the media. 55% of girls as compared with 38% of boys think racism divides young people but the

figures for race are slightly higher among boys 38% as compared with 36% for girls. It would be unwise to make too much of this difference since the nuance between terms may not have been picked up. The reported difference concerning the media is of interest to us here. 17% of females consider the media to be a divisive factor among young people whereas only 4% of males do. (For females the raw scores are 17/101 and for males 3/85)

Interview and survey data about the viewing of Indian films points to a much greater affinity for them among girls. Because a girl's 'taste' in this respect and even more broadly speaking (as in their attachment to romantic fiction and girl's magazines) is often ridiculed by boys (as 'soft', 'wet', 'stupid') they may perceive their taste in media as more divisive than do boys. A boy's taste would not be contested and challenged in the same way as a girl's. Gender socialisation involves socialisation into gender specific sets of tastes which act as social and cultural boundaries. Females are probably more aware of this than their male counterparts because it is their tastes, (rather like popular working class tastes) which are the subject of criticism. Whilst taste can be seen as a mechanism through which gender boundaries are laid, reinforced and negotiated, one must be cautious in reading too much into these rather small figures.

WHAT DIVIDES ADULTS IN SOUTHALL

Question 67 (see page 37 of questionnaire) enquires about young people's perceptions of what divides adults in Southall and there is a consensus similar to that found in responses to the previous question in that religion and culture are seen as the primary cleavages between adults.

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Numbers</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
religion	120/184	65.22
culture	99/185	53.51
racism	54/179	30.17
class	71/185	38.38
school	21/75	11.73
competition	38/185	20.54
race	71/185	38.38
money	62/180	34.44
fear	43/185	23.24
media	26/185	14.05
politics	36/179	20.11

Thus while adults are more divided by religion, politics and the media, young people appear to be more divided than their elders by racism, competition and fear.

WHAT UNITES YOUNG PEOPLE IN SOUTHALL

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
gangs	24/165	14.55
school	23/165	13.94
youth clubs	14/163	8.59
discos	14/164	8.54
pop style	7/163	4.29
place of worship	5/163	3.07
nothing	5/163	3.07

Unlike the question on division this question was open (see question 68 on p.38 of questionnaire) which perhaps explains the lower response rate. Interestingly, gangs are seen as a way of uniting people.

However, of the 94 girls responding to the question 18% thought that school unites young people whilst 27% (out of 70) boys reported gangs as a unifying force. Other factors mentioned received very low scores i.e. discos, youth clubs, places of worship and pop style.

A notable absence from the list offered by respondents was the media and from this one can only infer that the media are not foremost in young people's minds as serving a unifying function. Pop style, the only media related category, was cited by just under 5% of females and 3% of males.

On the contrary gangs, for boys are a more tangible and obvious feature of peer cohesion especially in Southall where the existence of two gangs (Holy Smoke and Tuti Nang) command strong affiliation and loyalty. The gangs and their activities have been seen as a major source of conflict and violence among young males. Many boys will identify with one of the gangs and may derive a sense of group solidarity as a result.

For girls, it is unsurprising that school should be seen as a site of social cohesion as this is their principle territory of public life and the place where young people come together and where they are most likely to come into contact with peers perceived as different to themselves. Boys, in contrast, are more likely to participate in a 'street' culture where protection is often needed in the endless playing out of rivalries so common among social groups where machismo is a dominant feature. In this case 'insiders' unite against 'outsiders'.

3.5 PARENTAL RULES

The question asked respondents to tick which of the rules listed applied to them at that time. (see Q.18 on p.17 of questionnaire).

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
set times for doing homework	84/315	26.67
doing homework at the weekend	88/315	28.03
times for going out in the day	101/314	32.17
times for going out at night	109/314	34.71
I don't go out at night	103/301	34.22
school friends you <u>can't</u> bring home	54/314	17.20
boys should keep away from	106/314	33.76
girls should keep away from	61/314	19.43
housework to share with your brothers	102/314	32.48
housework to share with your sisters	118/314	37.58
helping father	146/314	46.50
helping mother	190/314	60.51
earning money INSIDE the family	67/300	22.33
earning money OUTSIDE the family	36/299	12.04
helping the family earn money	58/312	18.59
praying at home	98/311	31.51
going to worship	111/310	35.81
times to start watching TV	67/310	21.61
times to stop watching TV	68/310	21.94
not watching sex on TV	80/310	26.14
not watching violence	29/309	9.39
time for watching videos	64/309	20.71
videos you can't watch	71/309	22.98
recording programmes for yourself	55/309	17.80
any reading you SHOULD do	56/309	18.12
RELIGIOUS reading you should do	21/296	7.09
reading you are not allowed	29/306	9.48

The most prevalent rules set by parents are 'helping mother' (60%); 'helping father' (46%); 'housework to share with sisters' (37%); going to worship (35%) and boys you should keep away from (33%) Going out, doing homework, rules about video, television and reading follow in descending order. This gives a picture of the areas of young people's lives which are most and least regulated. But there are also gender differences in the rules set by parents.

	% for males	% for females
set times for doing homework	26	26
doing homework at the weekend	27	27
times for going out in the day	27	37
times for going out at night	37	35
I don't go out at night	23	47
school friends you <u>can't</u> bring home	15	19
boys should keep away from	24	43
girls should keep away from	14	25
housework to share with your brothers	30	35
housework to share with your sisters	27	47
helping father	49	44
helping mother	49	73
earning money INSIDE the family	20	24
earning money OUTSIDE the family	11	12
helping the family earn money	20	16
praying at home	31	32
going to worship	38	33
times to start watching TV	20	22
times to stop watching TV	20	23
not watching sex on TV	24	28
not watching violence	10	8
time for watching videos	17	24
videos you can't watch	21	24
recording programmes for yourself	17	18

any reading you SHOULD do	15	21
RELIGIOUS reading you should do	7	7
reading you are not allowed	8	10

The most prevalent parental rules for girls concern helping mother (73%), housework (47%), and boys you should keep away from (43%). For boys, the most prevalent rules are helping both parents (49%), going to worship (38%) and going out at night (37%).

Boys and girls report little difference in parental rules on times for doing homework. In the three out of ten households where such rules are set, they apply also to homework over the weekend. The slightly more common rules on religious observance, likewise, show little gender differentiation. Over a third of respondents report parental rules on worship at temples or mosques and domestic prayer for a slightly lower number. Rules on religious reading at home are comparatively uncommon but were most prevalent among Hindu girls (18%). Thus, while on the whole, school duties and religious duties show little gender distinction all other rules are reported more commonly by girls than boys. This applies most clearly to domestic help, going out at night and to peer contact.

76% of all girls and 58% of boys report set times or an absolute injunction as far as going out at night is concerned but among girls the absolute injunction is almost twice as prevalent (49%) as among boys (25%). The pattern is mirrored in parent's control of contact with peers of the opposite sex. Only 14% of boys as compared with 47% of girls report parental influence on cross gender peer contact. Muslim parents imposed both disciplines more widely than Sikhs or Hindus. For Muslim boys the figures for going out and cross gender peer contact are twice as prevalent as for Sikhs (35% as against 15% who never go out at night and 23% as compared with 11% who are warned of 'girls they should keep away from'. Among girls, only those of Hindu parents fall below a prevalence of 49% for either injunctions.

Clear gender differences are evident in the application of rules about domestic work. The gender specificity of female work is much more pronounced than that of male work. While fathers are reported to expect help from their daughters (45%) almost as much as from their sons (48%), the inverse does not apply. Mothers expect help from 49% of their sons and from 74% of their daughters. Even allowing for the under-reporting of boys, the help patterns in the sibling group confirm this asymmetry. While only 27% of all boys report rules for helping their sisters, 37% of girls report rules on helping their brothers. The greatest degree of symmetry appears in the reports of Hindu youths, of whom 58% report rules on helping their mothers and 33% on helping their sisters.

The questions on the use of TV and VCR reveal a number of similarly asymmetric patterns but also one interesting reversal. 22%, or approximately 1 in 5 youths, reported strictures on times to start and stop watching TV as well as for the use of video. All these are reported more commonly by girls; their percentage scores exceed those of boys by 4% for starting and 7% for stopping watching TV and 10% for VCR use. Similarly, more girls (25%) than boys (20%) report that there are video cassettes that they are not allowed to watch.

Parental censoring of content shows far greater vigilance on sexually explicit material (25%) than on portrayals of violence (8%). In an interesting reversal it appears that more girls than boys are prevented from watching sexually explicit material (28% as compared with 23%). Yet, more boys than girls report parental censoring of screen violence (9% as compared with 6%). The reversal is not however conclusive but it would appear that parents see sexually explicit programmes as a greater danger to daughters and violent programmes as a greater danger to sons but that daughters are controlled more conscientiously, fearfully or effectively than sons not only in the timing but also in the censoring of material.

Parental control over access to the media shows some interesting patterns if one compares across the three faiths. So far as the VCR is

concerned. Sikh boys appear to enjoy most freedom from control. Summing up all three questions related to the VCR only 34% of Sikh boys report at least one injunction whereas 80% of Muslim and 81% of Hindu boys do likewise. In other words 66% of Sikh boys report none of the vcr rules, when only 20% of Muslim and 18% of Hindu boys can say the same. Control of content, be it violent, sexually explicit, or a prohibition on certain video tapes appears most widespread in Muslim families. Here too, however, sex is censored more widely than violence 46% for Muslim boys and, a probable under-reporting for Muslim girls (41%) due perhaps to embarrassment.

These data on reported rules can now be contextualised with the help of data reporting youth's TV and VCR activities and preferences in order to compare the perceived parental norms with informants actual behaviour.

3.6. COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

Respondents were asked to tick those statements with which they agreed. (See Q.59 and Q.60 on p.34 of questionnaire)

COURTSHIP

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
-Going out with a boy or a girl is normal at my age	108/186	58.06
-My parents think it is normal at my age	19/186	10.22
-It's not normal in my culture and I respect that	75/186	40.32
-It is wrong for anyone unless they want to marry	32/186	17.20
-It's all right as long as you keep it a secret	57/186	30.65
-Going out does not HAVE to lead to marriage	109/186	56.99
-Going out SHOULD NOT lead to marriage	42/186	22.58

-If young people go out it's none of their parent's business	58/186	31.18
-If I go out, it's none of my parent's business	45/186	24.19
-Parents should know more about it but be more understanding	124/186	66.67
-Parents should know about it so they can give advice	88/186	47.31

A brief summary of the results to this question will be given including some of the gender, age and religious differences which are of significance from the cross-tabulations.

The principle clustering of responses in order of priority are

- a) parents should know more about their children 'going out' but be more understanding (66.67%)
- b) that going out is normal at my age (58.06%) and that
- c) 'Going out' does not have to lead to marriage (56.99%)

Over half the sample think that it is normal to 'date' at their age. This compares with 4 in 10 who think that it is not normal in their culture. Over two-thirds of boys (54/83) think it is normal to 'go out' with a girl as compared with half the girls (51/100). Nearly twice as many Sikh girls (46.72%) as boys (26.83%) think that it is not normal to 'date'. Almost a third of the sample thought it was 'all right to go out if it was kept a secret' (30.65%) Under a third of respondents think that if young people 'go out' that it is none of their parents' business (31.18%) Almost half of both male and female respondents agreed that parents should know more about it because they can give advice. There was little support for the contention, widespread among parents and endorsed by Punjabi traditions, that 'going out' should be linked to the intention to marry (58.82%) However, two-thirds of boys compared to half of the girls thought that 'going out does not have to lead to marriage'.

MARRIAGE

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
-People who marry should be of the same culture	65/186	34.95
-People should be free to marry whom they like	140/186	75.27
-People should marry in their own caste	34/185	18.38
-I personally would prefer a marriage within my own culture	90/185	48.65
-I would only enter a mixed marriage if my parents agreed	83/185	44.86
-If I wanted a mixed marriage I would do it against my family	47/184	25.54

Three quarters of respondents agreed with the statement that people should be free to marry whom they like. This reflects the increasing desire on the part of young people to participate in decisions about their marriage. Yet just under half also agreed that they would prefer to marry someone of their own culture. Caste would not appear to be a significant factor for young people. under 1 in 5 considered that people should marry in their own caste. Such opinions, however, are not born out by practices where caste endogamy remains prevalent.

Cross-tabulations according to religion and rural/urban background of the parents suggest that the more urban the parental background the lower the agreement with the statements concerning the importance of caste and culture in marriage arrangements and vice versa among young people of parents from village background. This would suggest that young people with more traditional backgrounds are more likely to be encouraged to uphold traditional practices in marriage arrangements. Of course, how they respond to such pressures varies but ethnographic data would indicate that where the pressures are moderate and reasonable young people respond favourably. Where the pressures are strong and arrangements are not negotiable a young person is much more likely to

rebel. Since the nature and degree of religious faith and practice are linked to norms and values associated with marriage arrangements, a similar pattern prevails.

The responses to whether 'people should be free to marry whom they like' highlight the significance of the rural/urban background of parents. 80% of Sikhs and 91% of Hindus whose mothers came from cities felt they should be free to marry whom they like compared with 65% of Sikhs and 81% of Hindus with mothers from villages. However, given the disproportionate sample sizes for the different religions, and for young people with rural/urban parental backgrounds one cannot make too strong a claim regarding such differences on the basis of the figures alone. Nevertheless, ethnographic data points the significance of the rural/urban divide.

4.0 LEISURE, MEDIA, STARS AND STYLE

Young people's uses of TV can only be understood in the broader context of their leisure and patterns of cultural consumption.

4.1 PUBLIC LEISURE PURSUITS

The following table and summary gives an indication of young people's leisure pursuits. (see Q.5, p.12 of questionnaire). The figures are broken down according to gender since this factor showed more significant differences in leisure patterns than the breakdown according to age or religion.

IN THE LAST MONTH HAVE YOU BEEN TO ANY OF THESE PLACES?

	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>
Friends parties	53%	55%
Disco	39%	42%
Youth club	15%	40%
Leisure centre	26%	52%
Sports club	22%	45%
Games arcade	12%	51%
Place of worship	39%	50%
Cinema	26%	34%
	N=152	N=154

GOING TO PARTIES

It would seem that boys and girls attend friends' parties in similar numbers. Over half of the male and female respondents had been to a friend's party in the previous month. Since birthday parties, engagements, weddings and family based parties are most common, it is fair to suggest that a large part of young people's sociable activity takes place among friends in their family contexts. Ethnographic data would further support this contention.

DISCOS

39% of females and 41% of males had been to a disco in the previous month. The term disco requires clarification. Here respondents are likely to be referring to school discos which are regularly held

throughout the school year both in school time (e.g. at Xmas) and after school. Organising discos is the most successful way of raising funds for a variety of causes. These discos have a different set of connotations from either the afternoon Bhangra discos held at the Empire Leicester Square or Hammersmith Palais or the more conventional night time disco. Furthermore, the term disco can be synonymous with friends party where a DJ is present. Attendance at school discos is much easier 'to get away with' since parents seldom complain about their children being at school for some putatively legitimate reason and under the supervision of teachers. Of course, the major interest in discos is the display of personal style through clothes and dancing and accompanying courtship rituals. Discos are perhaps the most 'safe' (from adult control) environment where boys and girls can meet, talk and interact with 'romantic' intent.

YOUTH CLUBS

Boys are much more likely to attend youth clubs than girls. 40% of males and only 15% of girls had actually visited one in the previous month. For respondents of both sexes, going to a youth club is most common at the age of 12 and thereafter attendance declines steadily with age in the case of boys. In contrast, attendance for girls drops dramatically after the age of 15 to the extent that by age 16 and 17 attendance at youth clubs has been abandoned entirely. This, undoubtedly, is in part due to the increased parental control of girls at this age when they are approaching marriageable status.

LEISURE CENTRE

Whilst 52% of boys had visited a leisure centre in the previous week only 26% of girls had done so. It is now increasingly common that middle aged mums and 'Bhabis' (sister-in-laws) take their younger female kin to join aerobics and keep fit classes with them to facilitate communication with the instructor. Similarly, male relatives of different ages frequently come together for a game of squash, a swim, volley ball or hockey. Boys, too like to keep fit and maintain an attractive body shape and may be encouraged to go to a leisure centre with these aims in mind.

SPORTS CLUB

45% of boys attended a sports club in the previous month as compared with 22% of girls. Age is not a significant factor among boys but for girls there is a decrease in usage with age which may lend support to the assertion that parents, as their daughters get older, increasingly restrict their outings.

GAMES ARCADE

Over half the sample of boys, 51%, as compared with only 21% of girls had visited a games arcade in the previous month. This gives no indication of the frequency but my fieldwork would suggest that this is a daily hobby for many boys despite the fact that gambling is, in principle, prohibited in all three religions.

PLACE OF WORSHIP

37% of all boys and 53% of girls had been to a place of worship during the past month. This does not imply that one sex is more religious than the other (even though Hinduism claims that women are spiritually superior to men), rather, for many girls this is one of the few acceptable social outlets where they may go with their family and also socialise with others. It should be noted that attending one's place of worship is often perceived as a 'good' place to meet eligible partners (in terms of religion, caste or 'clan').

Some religious differences emerged Muslim boys were keenest (52% ; N=27) followed by Sikhs (33%; N=81) and then Hindus (29%; N=34). Just under 60% of Hindu (N=17) and Muslim (N=22) girls had attended their place of worship compared with 52% of Sikh girls (N=84). But it is important to remember that we are referring to young people mostly born in the U.K. and subject to a wider range of influences from Britain's secular culture. Pride, particularly caste pride, is expressed in other ways than by attendance at gurudwara (e.g. through gang membership and by being tough and macho). Caste may be less important among young Hindus than among their parents or relatives in India and its importance is likely to have been attenuated by the

relatively few Hindu temples in Southall which has led to a greater mixing of castes.

CINEMA

34% of boys and 32% of girls had attended the cinema in the month prior to the survey. Cinema outings were most popular among 15 year old boys 50% of whom had attended the cinema in the month preceding the questionnaire. Clearly, the popularity of the cinema is increasing but this must also be understood in the light of attempts to find 'private' or secluded places where groups of boys and girls can freely interact outside the constraints imposed in Southall by elders.

4.2 DOMESTIC MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES

<u>Equipment</u>	<u>Percentage (N=217)</u>
a fixed colour TV set	89.9
2 fixed colour TV sets	52.2
3 fixed colour TV sets	22.2%
a portable colour TV set	41.6%
a fixed black and white TV set	13.8%
a portable black and white TV set	16.2%
a remote control	85.5%
Teletext	48.0%
Prestel	11.6%
a video recorder	88.5%
cable television	22.1% (1)
a satellite dish	8.8% (2)

(1) This figure is consistent with that of cable penetration figures obtained from Westside cable for the Southall area at the time of the survey (summer 1989)

(2) This figure is now inaccurate judging the greater number of satellite dishes at present visible in the Southall area compared to summer 1989.

Location of TV sets

	<u>Percentage (N=217)</u>
TV set in the main living room	91.2%
in other living room	25.9%
in the dining room	15.4%
in the kitchen	10.6%
in the main bedroom	47.7%
in a children's bedroom	42.6%

Home computers

59.9% of households (N=217) have a home computer and 50.2% computer games. Although no data are available about use of computers, from my qualitative research it would seem likely that most home computers are mainly used for playing games rather than for word processing or other computer facilities available.

Video cameras

31% of homes own a video camera which reflects its growing use for documenting major rites of passage.

Hi-fi systems

75.1% of homes have a hi-fi system and 45.9% have two. Houses receiving cable TV very often have their Hi-fi systems connected to their television in order to listen to the music channels (MTV and Jukebox) in stereo or even in some cases quadrophonic sound. In cabled homes, it is therefore not unusual that these music channels are used like a radio for 'background music' accompanied by the video which provides 'background images'

Walkman

87.6% of respondents (N=217) reported having easy access to one walkman and 45.9% two. This reflects the current fashion of walking, running, travelling, studying and seemingly doing a wide variety of activities while listening to music on personal delivery systems.

Radio

87.1% of households (N=217) have one radio and 70.7% have two. Sunrise radio, the local station broadcasts (or narrowcasts to be more precise) in English in the morning and Panjabi in the afternoon and evening, in the west London area.

4.3 PATTERNS OF FAMILY VIEWING

(A) Which types of programme do you often watch with the family?

(B) Which types of programme do you talk about with your parents?

(C) Which type of programme did you actually watch in the last week?

(D) Which type of programme do you prefer to watch without older people?

	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
NEWS	76	43	64	0
COMEDY	74	19	78	43
CRIME	56	17	64	34
SOAPS	54	13	59	37
CARTOONS	51	7	72	36
GAME SHOW	51	10	65	0
QUIZ	48	10	61	0
POP	38	5	71	63
CHILDREN'S	38	5	69	0
NATURE	33	13	37	0
DOCUMENTARY	25	9	39	0
SCIENCE	22	4	30	21
SCI FI	20	3	36	0
CURRENT AFFAIRS	20	4	28	0

N=194-217

N=194-217

N=194-217

N=179-186

Which types of programme do you often watch with the family? (Figures given in percentages)

	<hr/> males	<hr/> females
NEWS	74	78
COMEDY	72	75
CRIME	57	55
SOAPS	48	58
CARTOONS	47	55
GAME SHOW	51	44
QUIZ	42	54
POP	31	45
CHILDREN'S	33	42
NATURE	35	39
DOCUMENTARY	28	22
SCIENCE	28	16
SCI FI	29	12
CURRENT AFFAIRS	21	18
	N=103-4	N=111-2

(B) Which kinds of programme do you talk about with parents?
 (D) Which type of programme do you prefer to watch without older people?
 (Figures given in percentages)

	(B)		(D)	
	males	females	males	females
NEWS	34	50	0	0
COMEDY	17	20	47	40
CRIME	13	21	43	25
SOAPS	7	20	32	40
CARTOONS	4	10	72	36
GAME SHOW	10	11	0	0
QUIZ	7	13	0	0
POP	3	7	54	70
CHILDREN'S	5	4	0	0
NATURE	12	13	0	0
DOCUMENTARY	10	8	0	0
SCIENCE	4	4	0	0
SCI FI	3	3	0	0
	N=88-91	N=104	N=79-84	N=97-100

(C) Which types of programme did you actually watch in the last week?
(Figures given in percentages)

	males	females
NEWS	61	66
COMEDY	78	79
CRIME	67	63
SOAPS	56	62
CARTOONS	66	79
GAME SHOW	63	67
QUIZ	57	66
POP	66	76
CHILDREN'S	59	78
NATURE	49	26
DOCUMENTARY	42	36
SCIENCE	41	21
SCI FI	51	22
	N=90	N=103

4.4. TV GENRES AND FAMILY VIEWING

Of the television genres most often watched with the whole family news, comedy, crime and soaps. There is then a break in the figures indicating the genres and types of video least often viewed with the whole family;

pop music 38.4%, children's programmes 38.1%, nature programmes 32.9%, documentaries 25.1%, science fiction 20.4% and lastly current affairs at 19.9%.

4.5 GENDER DIFFERENCES IN FAMILY VIEWING

A gender breakdown of the question enquiring about 'programmes most often watched with the whole family', points to some interesting differences. The genres which more boys than girls report watching with the whole family are as follows in order of greatest reported difference

science fiction	29%	males to	12%	females
science programmes	28%	.	16%	.
game shows	51%		44%	
documentaries	28%	.	22%	.
crime	57%		55%	

Whether these figures actually represent types of programmes more frequently viewed by boys with their family or male viewing behaviour more generally remains to be seen. However, this draws attention to the fact that the generic categories which more boys view are those commonly perceived as 'male' genres. Genres, by contrast, which more girls report as family viewing include

pop programmes	45%	of girls to	31%	of boys
quiz shows	54%		42%	
soaps	58%		48%	
cartoons	55%		47%	
children's TV	41%		33%	

About one third of the genres listed were reported to be watched with the whole family by similar numbers of males and females;

news	73%	males to	77%	females
comedy	72%		75%	
crime	57%		56%	
Game Shows	52%		50%	
Nature	34%		31%	

4.6 TV GENRES YOUNG PEOPLE PREFER TO WATCH WITHOUT ADULTS

The figures pertaining to those types of TV genres least likely to be 'viewed with their whole family' broadly correspond with those which relate to genres that respondents prefer to watch without older people. A majority of young people (62.9%) reported that they preferred to watch pop programmes without adults. 43.2% of respondents reported that they would prefer to watch comedy 36.5% soaps and 36.2% cartoons in the absence of the elders. This again, points to the difference between preferred and actual viewing behaviour. Clearly, pop is the most contentious of TV genres due to the explicit and often erotic nature of the dancing and styles of self-presentation which many parents frown upon. Most young people, for example, would not like to watch Madonna in front of their parents. Similarly, comedies where references to sex or other taboo topics are likely to occur, deters young people from viewing with parents. As for cartoons, it is likely that young people want to present themselves as beyond the stage of watching cartoons since this might encourage parents to treat them as children.

4.7 ACTUAL AND PREFERRED VIEWING

If we compare the figures for those types of programmes which respondents 'actually watched in the last week' with those usually viewed with the whole family, patterns of actual viewing behaviour and in some cases, generic preference begin to emerge. From a half to three quarters reported having watched the genres listed below, given in order of percentage frequency:

77.8% comedy
72.2% cartoon
70.6% pop
68.0% children's tv
64.9% game shows
64.4% crime series
63.9% news,
61.3% quiz shows
58.8% soap

Less than one half of respondents watched the following genres:
36.6% watched a wildlife, 35.6% a sci fi, 30.4% a popular science programme and 26.7% watched a current affairs programme.

Figures relating to the question on programmes which respondents try to watch each week' (N=118) indicate viewing preferences. (See Q.50, p.29 of questionnaire)

67.2% reported Neighbours
27.4% The Cosby Show
27.6% The Bill
23.7% Eastenders
22.2% Dallas
20.2% Home and Away
20.0% Dynasty
17.9% Top of the Pops
7.0% Miami Vice
6.1% Grange Hill and Brookside
2.6% Prisoner Cell Block H.

These figures highlight the primary popularity of 'Neighbours' in contrast to the relatively lower position of soaps in the TV genre tables. This raises the methodological question of how best to elicit viewing preferences, i.e. by genre or, as in the latter case, by an open ended question. Clearly, slightly different results are obtained.

4.8 ACTUAL VIEWING AND FAMILY DISCUSSION

It would appear that news and comedy are both most frequently watched and most frequently discussed by young people and their parents. Of the programmes actually watched 'in the last week' 43.1% of respondents discussed the news bulletin with parents; 19% a comedy programme; 17.3% a science fiction programme; The remaining genres were in each case discussed by 10% or less of respondents with their parents. TV viewing in the family context does not appear to generate much discussion between parents and their children with the exception

of news (and Indian videos which are discussed by 32% of respondents. See section of video use)

4.9.FAMILY AND INDIVIDUAL CHANNEL PREFERENCES

Of the valid sample (N=188) responding to the question concerning their family's channel preference

82.4%	reported that their family preferred BBC1 and
75.5%	ITV (in sharp contrast
with) 16.0%	Channel 4
6.9%	BBC2.

The figures for respondent's individual channel preference, whilst not so dramatic as those of their family's preference are broadly comparable in ranking. Thus,

63.7%	reported their favourite channel as BBC1
44.9%	ITV
20.8%	Channel 4 and
12.8%	BBC2.

The relatively higher figures among young people claiming preference for BBC2 and Channel 4 indicates perhaps less an aspirational difference and more that the minority channels do cater for teenage interests, as well as, a greater degree of linguistic/cultural competence in engaging with these channel.

4.10 VIDEO USE

The timer switch:

91.5% of the valid sample (N=211) claim they are able to use the timer switch to record programmes. Of course this gives no indication of how efficiently or effectively they may do so.

Remote control:

A similar case in point arises when examining the figures relating to the question 'who in your family uses the remote control most often' 45.5% claim that they, themselves, use it most often followed by

brother 34.3%, father 17%, sister 10.9% . 6.9% claim that the family share its use whilst only 4.5% of mothers are reported to use it most.

The relatively large figure of 45.5% claiming 'I use it most often' probably has to do with a perception of use rather than actual use. It is revealing to compare:

parent's use (21.5%) with that of siblings (79.8%) and males in the family (fathers and sons 41.3%) as opposed to females in the family (5.4% mothers and daughter)

Video Recording

- 36.4% of the valid sample (N= 211) did not record any programmes in the week preceeding the survey.
- 41.5% claim they recorded between 1 and 4 programmes and
- 9.6% between 5 and 10 programmes.

Of all respondents

- 39.4% claim that they usually record more
- 19.7% less and
- 40.9% report that this is a 'normal' number of recordings.

4.11 VIDEO HIRE: FAMILY AND YOUTH

Of the valid sample (N=208) respondents reported that

20.9%	of families did not borrow any videos,
48.5%	borrowed between 1-3,
21.4%	3-6,
4.9%	6-10
4.9%	more than 10.

- 52% claim that this is a normal number
- 19.2% that they usually borrow more and
- 16.8% that most weeks they borrow less
- 21.2% claim that in winter they borrow more.
- 49.4% borrow videos from the same video shop whilst
- 47.9% from several
- 39.3% borrow videos from relatives locally
- 5.3% from relatives abroad (this would refer primarily to family videos documenting rites of passage)
- 14.6% of videos are borrowed from colleagues at the father's workplace and 19.4% from the mother's.
- 38.3% from neighbours
- 43.2% from school friends.

The evidence suggests that family viewing is fragmented according to taste

Of the valid sample (N=207)

- 24.4% of respondents claim they do not watch any of the videos borrowed by their family
- 35.1% watch one or two
- 11.2% watch about half of them
- 13.7% most of them and 15.6% all of them.

A rather better ratio of borrowing to viewing may be expected from the remarkably high 43.2% of videos borrowed from school friends.

Among young people word of mouth is probably one of the most significant factors, alongside marketing by film/video industries in establishing trends and fashions in video viewing. This is further backed up by local video dealers who claim that whether a video 'takes-off' among young people will depend on whether 'their mates' have seen it and recommended it, thus provoking a chain reaction. Even when films are box office hits and successful in the video shops, they may not take off locally unless key figures in the peer group watch them, enjoy them and recommend them.

'Pivotal' personalities operate in the peer group informing and advising what is desirable viewing. Video shop owners too have their key informants among young clients who assist them in their business decisions especially when calculating how popular a video is likely to be and therefore how many copies to stock.

4.12 FAMILY VIDEO LIBRARIES

Of the valid sample (N=205)

16.6% of respondents have less than 10 videos

18.5% have 10-20

22.9% 20-30

13.2% 30-50

16.6% more than 50 and

12.2 % more than 100.

The majority are Indian films	67.2%)
English films	54.1%) and
TV recordings	53.1%). Thereafter,
Pop videos	35.1%
Family videos	26.8%
Religious films	18.6%
Indian TV soaps	9.8%
Other	12.5%

4.13 CULTURALLY DISTINCTIVE CHOICES IN TV AND VIDEO VIEWING

Young people's viewing of 'ethnic programmes'

In order to gain some idea of the viewing patterns for programmes targetted at 'ethnic minorities', respondents were asked to identify which of the programmes itemised they had watched 'several times'.

Of the valid sample (N=215)

84.5% The Cosby Show

61.0% Network East

41.5% Movie Mahal

36.5% Channel 4's Indian Movie Seasons.

Thereafter, the figures drop considerably;
20.5% have watched Shrikant (a Hindi soap broadcast on BBC2)
15.4% Soul Train
13.0% Teesra Kinara (a Hindi soap on Channel 4)
9.8% Bandung File.

Gender differences in young people's viewing of 'ethnic programmes'

A gender breakdown of these figures reveals a similarly high percentage of viewers for 'The Cosby Show' among males (84.4%) and females (84.6%). Clearer gender differences begin to emerge with programmes targetted specifically at 'Asian' viewers, highlighting the consisently higher viewing figures among girls of 'Asian' programmes.

47.5% of boys have watched Network East several times compared with 74.7% of girls.

27.1% of boys have watches Movie Mahal several times as compared with 54.9% of girls.

29.1% of boys have watched Channel 4's Indian Movie Season as to 42.2% of girls.

14.5% of boys have watched Shrikant as compared with 26.2% of girls and finally

9.7% of boys have watched Teesra Kinara as compared with 16.2% of girls.

Type of video most often watched with the family (N=217)

(Refer to Q.34 Q.35 on P.22 of questionnaire)

Indian video 66%; English video 55%; American video 51%

Type of video most often discussed with parents

Indian video 32%
English video 15%
American video 10%

Young people's viewing of video films

In order to identify whether there were any culturally distinctive patterns in viewing video films, film titles, thought to be exemplars or 'ideal types' of a particular genre, were given in the questionnaire. (see Q.32 on p.21 of questionnaire) Respondents were asked to tick which videos on the list they had seen. Whilst the figures give no firm data on preference, they do however, reflect actual viewing behaviour. Thus, of the valid sample (N=214)

83.2% had seen Police Academy
82.7% Beverly Hills Cop
79.5% Rambo
76.2% Nightmare on Elm Street and
73.5% Commando

Respondents were as likely to have seen the Evil Dead (63.5%) as Mother India (64.7) and Gandhi (58.9%).

They were almost as likely to have seen My Beautiful Launderette (45.7%) as Dirty Dancing (50.7%).

They were more likely to have seen Jai Santoshi Maa, (39.1%) (a Hindu religious classic) than Cry Freedom (33.0%) but most unlikely (9.7%) to have seen a Satyajit Rai classic, 'Pather Panchali'.

Thus, it would appear that young people are more likely to have seen American blockbuster videos than either popular or classic Indian films.

4.14 VIEWING OF INDIAN FILMS ON VIDEO

Indian films are most frequently viewed by over one third of respondents (37%, N=215) 'most weekends'. Just under one third of the sample view them 'once a week' and one quarter 'more than once a

week'. The overlap between these categories is of course impossible to estimate but if one adds to these figures the following:

13% watch most days and 1.3% everyday then this suggests that Indian films may be viewed at least once a week by 50%-70% of respondents.

- 5% of respondents never watch them
- 20% very seldom watch them
- 8% say they used to but they have stopped.

Thus 33% never, or rarely watch Indian films on video which suggests that between 60%-70% watch them fairly regularly.

4.15 GENDER DIFFERENCES IN VIEWING INDIAN FILMS ON VIDEO

A gender breakdown of these figures highlights more frequent viewing of Indian films by female respondents:

25.8% of girls watch them 'most weekends' as compared with 17.4% of boys

15.0%	'most days'	10.6%
16.9%	'once a week'	9.7%
13.3%	'more than once a week'	9.7%
2.6%	'every day'	0.0%

10.7% of girls watch them 'once a month' as compared with 19.4% of boys

19.6%	'very seldom'	20.3%
3.0%	'never'	13.5%

This evidence supports my previous ethnographic research which highlighted the more frequent viewing of Indian films among girls and women than among boys and men. This can be seen as a key activity in the female cultures which arise from their 'domesticity'. Whilst just under 40% of mothers are employed outside the home, either full-time or part-time, women still remain largely confined in the domestic realm for leisure and participate much less in an active public social life than do their male counterparts. Moreover, the melodramatic and romantic nature of many popular Hindi films would firmly place them in

the category 'woman's genre' and therefore would make them more attractive to women. Language and cultural familiarity are also undeniably important factors, given the tendency of women to communicate more in Panjabi than either their husbands or children. Thus, girls tend to remain with their mothers, sisters, grandmothers and aunts and female neighbours/friends for socialising and entertainment purposes in the domestic realm to a much greater extent than their male counterparts.

4.16 JUDGEMENTS ABOUT INDIAN FILMS

In response to questions concerning attitudes to Indian films out of the valid sample (N=213)

49.7% 'they help me with the language'
36.1% 'I enjoy them'
32.8% 'They help bring the family together'
30.9% 'They tell me something about the real 'Asia'
26.7% 'They do not show the real Asia'
21.5% 'I find them too slow'
20.6% 'They teach me about Asian culture'
18.7% 'They teach me about my religion'
18.7% 'My parents like me to watch them'
11.2% 'I can watch with friends'

43.1% 'I like to watch the stars most'
31.9% 'I like the songs and dance most'
23.0% 'I like the action most'
21.1% 'I like the dialogue most'.

(These figures add up to more than 100% because some respondents ticked more than once)

4.17 GENDER DIFFERENCES IN JUDGMENTS ABOUT INDIAN FILMS

A gender breakdown of these figures indicates a greater engagement with Indian films among girls

	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>
I do not like Indian films	14.4%	29.7%
I enjoy them	47.7%	23.7%
I find them too slow	18.0%	25.7%
They help me with the language	38.7%	22.7%
They tell me something about 'Asia'	36.9%	24.7%
They do not show the 'real Asia'	29.7%	23.7%
They bring the family together	33.3%	32.6%
My parents like me to watch them	20.7%	23.7%
They teach me about my religion	18.8%	27.9%
They teach me about 'Asian culture'	26.1%	14.8%
I can watch them with friends	18.0%	3.9%

Similar differences emerge in the aspects of Indian films which boys and girls like.

	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>
I like watching the stars most	63.5%	21.7%
I like the songs and dancing most	61.2%	20.7%
I like the action most	17.7%	30.6%
I like the dialogue most	25.2%	16.8%

4.18 STARS

Of the valid sample(N= 239-246) where respondents reported their favourite stars, it was found that so many different names were given that very small figures for most were obtained. However, of those more widely referred to as favourite stars were

Michael Jackson	23.5%
Tom Cruise	13.8%
Madonna	13.4%
Kylie Minogue	12.2%
George Michael	10.0%
Jason Donovan	9.7%
Bros	9.2%
Bruce Willis	8.8%
Bobby Brown	6.9%
Sylvester Stallone	5.86
Michael Fox	4.88
Sri Devi	4.47
Joan Collins	4.44
Govinda	4.18
Others	57.74

Michael Jackson is by far the most popular of stars with both males and females. All stars or celebrities were more popular with females than males, apart from Michael Jackson. For Madonna, Kylie Minogue, Tom Cruise and Jason Donovan the ratio was 3:1 in favour of female 'fans'. Madonna becomes more popular with males and females as they get older, in contrast to Kylie Minogue where the reverse trend is shown

4.19 NATIONALITY OF FAVOURITE STARS

A breakdown of the nationality of the stars cited revealed that

- 37.3% - American
- 25.6% - English
- 16.7% - Asian
- 8.9% - Australian
- 11.1% - Mixed

4.20 PERSONAL STYLE

Respondents were asked (Q57) what were the most important things in their own self-presentation, dress and style

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
To look cool	61%
To be respectable	46%
To show a bit of class	44%
To stay OK with my parents	40%
To look elegant or sophisticated	30%
To look totally personal	28%
To show guts	27%
To respect my culture	25%
To be like my friends	23%
To show modesty	17%
To rebel against rules	14%
To show self-esteem	10%

The gender breakdown for these figures highlights that males are more concerned 'to look cool' (66%), 'to show a bit of class' (48%) and 'to be respectable' (41%) while girls want 'to stay OK with their parents' (48%) 'to look cool' (46%), 'to look elegant' (36%) and 'to respect their culture' (35%)

4.21 THE COUNTRIES THAT YOUNG PEOPLE IN SOUTHALL WOULD LIKE TO VISIT

The one country that young people in Southall would most like to visit is America. In contrast, interest in visiting South Asian or European countries is minimal.

<u>Country</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
USA	84/184	45.65
Australia	26/183	14.21
Canada	12/179	6.70
Europe	9/179	5.00
India	9/180	5.00
East Africa	7/178	3.93
Pakistan	1/179	0.56
Other Asian	9/179	5.03
Other countries	29/178	16.29

PERCEPTIONS OF USA and UK COMPARED

GOOD THINGS ABOUT AMERICA

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
weather	49/166	29.52
celebrities	29/166	17.47
size (i.e. big)	24/165	14.55
fashion	13/165	7.88
other	56/165	33.93

GOOD THINGS ABOUT ENGLAND

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
friendly	20/164	12.20
social services	15/164	9.15
countryside	9/164	5.49
laws	9/164	5.49

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BAD THINGS ABOUT AMERICA

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
crime	42/162	25.93
drugs	18/160	11.25
politics	8/159	5.03
racism	7/159	4.40

BAD THINGS ABOUT ENGLAND

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
weather	32/165	19.39
racism	19/165	11.52
government	18/165	10.91
dirty	17/165	10.30

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER TWO

FIELDWORK

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FIELDNOTES 7.11.88

CABLE TV - NEIGHBOURS ON TV AND IN SOUTHALL - TALKING ABOUT

TV AND FILMS - ROMANCE AND LOVE - MARRIAGE ARRANGEMENTS -

DOUBLE SIBLING MARRIAGES - STORMING OF THE GOLDEN TEMPLE -

BAPTISM -

Conversation with Amerjit during lunch hour in canteen - sparked off by her telling me that she had cable TV - reconstructed from notes.

AMARJIT KINGRA (female, 15 years old, jat sikh) Household consists of mother, father, 2 sisters - Paramjit (13) Harjinder (11) and 1 brother Jaswinder (9) She lives in old Southall - father is a builder - mother works for British Airways - in flight catering. Father actively supports Khalistan - parents very religious - attend Havelock Rd. Gurudwara several times per week.

-we don't watch cable TV that much, we watch movies on Premier, like Robo Cop. We used to watch the Indian channel, (Indra Dnush) but they play the same films over and over again but when we've got nothing else to do or watch we always have the music channel on MTV, plugged into the hi-fi

-the tv's on all day, that is from after school til 9pm we usually get home and then we'll watch Neighbours at 5.35 then Home and Away - By 6pm cable's on and we watch it every day from 6-9pm

-but I don't think it's worth it, you can't have separate channels you have to have all 18 and most things that come on we never watch like Lifestyle, it's so boring we never watch that or Sky, Sports and the foreign ones

-in fact we only watch 3 channels - the 2 film channels- the Premier ones and MTV, well we don't watch MTV much but we listen to it and sometimes Indra Dnush

- so we're thinking of getting rid of it, most of the people in our street that did have it are getting rid of it now, they think it's a waste of money, no-one watches it, but my neighbour's children they watched it all the time so that's why she's getting rid of it..they never got off the tv ..they had children's channel but we didn't cos my dad knew what we'd do, we'd sit and watch cartoons all day

- a lot of my brothers friends would come round to watch Premier films, sometimes we'd have 8 boys in our living room - the last time they came was to watch Grandview USA with Patrick Swayze

q-did your mum mind?

-yes she did but he's the only boy and boys get away with anything - she did mind but that didn't matter because he still brought them and you know once there there you can't kick them out, from his point of view it was good cos he looked 'cool' in front of his mates, and you know my dad didn't mind he thought, 'look there's my son being cool' and he used to give them nuts and crisps (she laughs) it used to be like the cinema in our front room

-but about a month ago we phoned them up and told them we didn't want it anymore, they came to collect the box but I didnt let them in because my dad wasn't here, and they haven't sent a letter or anything ..we got it cut off from the main computer box and the leads were everywhere, we were getting everything mixed up

q-can you still get cable tv?

-well (looks gleefully guilty) If I do a bit of fidgeting , I can still tune in because we've got a new tv its a Grundig with 99

channels, I can get them if I keep pressing the button, when dad's not there we tune in to the music channel

-but the problem is is just like normal TV now

q-what do you mean by normal tv?

-you know what time things are on but you're paying on top of it some people think it's different, at first I used to but now I think its normal

-one of the biggest problems of having cable is that evryone tells you to record films, well, the boys at school ask me and my uncle he had it and now he's had it cut off

q-who decided to get it in the first place?

-my dad and I decided, my sisters weren't that interested we thought 'all the neighbours are getting it' so we got it, my mum didn't want it she knew we'd just sit there and watch TV

-in the weekdays its on from 6-9 but then dad switches it off to watch the news, during the weekends it's on all day, the neighbours have it so we had to have it, you know it's like the ad, a chain reaction, like dominoes

-you know everyone's so much like that round here (laughs) first the person opposite got it, so dad goes we've got to get it and then the neighbour up the road asks if it's any good and obviously you can't say its rubbish, you'd look pretty stupid if you were paying out all that money for rubbish so she goes and gets it and so on...you know these adults they're like little kids, they have to show off and one tries to be better than the next like the people opposite, they got lead windows, dad then wanted lead windows but he didn't want squares cos then they'd think, 'oh he's copying us' but I guess we're the same, like if I come home and say to dad, 'dad, my friend's got a hi

fi in her bedroom, he knows exactly what I'm getting at, well it's just the same thing with cable

q-do you think it was the same with video?

-yeah probably, but I was much younger then..we've got 2 videos, dad got 2 because he didn't like us staying downstairs alone

-dads a builder and he comes home about 7 - he has a business partner, my god hes had so many partners but they always end up arguing but now hes got one who's all right- he's down India at the moment he's just got married and is travelling round with his new wife (cheeky grin) I do all the accounts for him and we calculate, you know, from the profit how much has to go to each cos they share it, they split it down the middle, he pays for all the building materials, dad does the work, I suppose, I am the clever one in the family I'm the eldest and yeah I suppose I do have a lot of responsibility, mum gets home about 6 but often she does overtime 2 or 3 hours she works for BA catering in flight services so dad and I will cook or sometimes we'll get a take away.

-we've got a tv and video in the lounge and upstairs we've got the old tv and video but the good thing is that you can take the cable lead upstairs, the bad thing is that you can't get all the channels because you can't keep switching it, the control box doesn't work unless you're sitting in front of it

-yeah so dad likes us to watch upstairs if we're alone cos then if someone comes to the door we can see who it is from upstairs..yeah I guess he is worried about safety and security there have been a lot of burglaries in our area, we're near the Havelock Estate and you can't say it's them, its more like the holies (gangs) who hang out in the alleys between Victoria Rd and Havelock Rd

The bell signalling the end of the lunch break went - Amerjit is a great talker she needed very little prompting and I made very few

interventions. We arranged to meet for lunch in the school canteen the following week to continue our conversation. I told her I was doing some research on TV and young people and she seemed eager to assist

Q-has cable TV changed things for you?

-when TV first came in everyone watched TV, that's all they sat on and then then slowly they'd begin to get off it and then when video came in everyone started watching video and then slowly they got off it and then cable TV came but now we've got used to it we don't hardly watch it

Q-can you get most films on video now that you can watch on cable?

-most of the Indian ones cos they only show the old ones but there are films that have just come up in the cinemas and that's good, Premier, that's what we used to watch

Q-do you still go to the video shop?

-yes but only for Indian films because most of the films that you want to watch are on video but things like Dirty Dancing we watch them on cable so there's no need to get them on video

Q-do you find that because less people have cable that you don't talk about it so much as say broadcast tv or videos?

- the people across the road, we'll say or they will- 'Oh, there's a good film on and so we'll both watch it and then discuss it if they're outside putting the milk bottles out of the way or something, if you happen to see them and so you pop across and see what they think about the film

-there was this film called 'Delivery Boys' and it was pretty boring but it sounded good, so they told us to watch it and then one day we're outside, they came out and I told them I didn't like it that

much and they said, 'yeah its pretty boring', ..or then they'll say Robo Cop or Dirty Dancing is on today and so I'll go and watch it and sometimes they'll come round our house and watch it or (vice versa)

-these are people our age...but they've had theirs cut off recently as well, just before us

-if you watch it and then you come to school and there's no one to talk to about it ..and no one's heard of it, you think, ohh (disappointment) it doesnt matter...cos, you know, with some films you really want to discuss it cos something really weird happened in it, like Neighbours if something really good happens you want to come to school and have a good natter about it..but with cable you can't do that

- we like discussing things on Neighbours, like Charlene kissing that boy and you know shes married so you just wonder what's gonna happen next..same with Home and Away, that's a pretty new Australian soap but you don't get things like that on cable its mainly American films..even if they're more, like, for older people

Q- are soaps your favourite?

-yeah

Q-why

-cos with films you watch them and forget all about it but with a soap you keep remembering what happened..oh this happened or that..its like real life it's as if you're just going down the street and you see someone and you say,'whats happening?' and they tell you the latest news, what people are up to, its a bit like gossip, you know, these people in real life and get to know them whereas that doesn't happen with cable, you watch it and then it comes to the end and they get married and then you think, oh well I knew they'd get married in the

end anyway whereas with Neighbours its different I don't know I'm getting fed up with cable

Q-is it that you're just less interested in TV generally as you get older?

-no I watch a lot of TV but the thing is it's like when we got video we all used to bring video films home, or dad gave us money, then we went off it and it's the same with cable we're not really interested in what comes on anymore

Q-what other progs do you regularly watch on TV?

-you mean on ordinary TV? 'The Bill', sometimes 'Eastenders', 'Top of the Pops that's about it'

-we got off Eastenders and Dallas when we got cable but we always watch Neighbours and Home and Away...switch cable off and they came on

-we don't usually know what time mum's gonna come home so we usually have the cable til about 9...dad only wants to watch the news so he'll watch that at 9 and we dont want to sit around so well all go up and maybe after that they'll watch Indian movies

- we've got tv in our own bedroom -us 3 sisters share a bedroom, my brother sleeps with mum and dad..hes a mummie's boy my brother always gets in with my dad so he always gets his own way so if he wants to watch a certain film he gets his way...once we had a fight over Robocop and I wanted to watch the other film on Premier and he got his way cos he's the youngest and he's a son.....he beats me up... he likes to watch the sport channel and then there's the wrestling... he learns a lot from that...and then there's womens wrestling.. that's so funny, it's brilliant..but it's good fun though it's going out..we used to watch foreign channels just for a bit we all used to crack up we just watched them see to how they talk and that, even though we

didn't understand a word of it but that was when we first got cable..there's the home video channel but my didn't get that

Q-do your parents have rules about what you watch

-theres a sign in the guide..but I never got sent up ..I could watch anything really..but then we wouldn't really be interested in that I mean half the films that come on we've never even heard of

Q- do you think TV influences you in any way?

-yeah, well if I watch Neighbours I copy the way Charlene talks and the way she answers back her parents and the way she answers everyone back and I'm like that with my mum..it just happens and then I think 'Oh God! that's the way Charlene talks!', and I regret it but then I think she's been a bit out of hand as well...she watches Neighbours she's really interested in it, even though she doesn't understand it very well, if she's late shell ask what happened

Q-do you tape it for her?

-no she's not that interested..but if there's something exciting going on..then she'll say, 'Oh I'll watch it tomorrow', and it's good cos then we can talk about it...she likes the Indian films on cable because they're old and she can remember them, they're very old..no recent ones they're all pretty boring..mum and dad watch Indra Dnush a lot

-my dad doesn't like us watching Indian films anyway..I don't know why..he's encouraging us to be westernised but then he wants us to remember that we are Indians...especially the ones that come out these days ..old ones he doesn't mind.. but he doesn't like us watching them latest ones, they fall in love and run away together, that doesn't happen in India that much, he lets us watch English films...in India you get married and then you fall in love..well that's true anyway cos when you get married you grow to love each other

- everyone wants a love marriage cos they watch that on films..everyone wants a love marriage I suppose..marry who they want to marry

Q-do you?

-well I've seen my brother make a mess out of his marriage..he's my dad's brother's son..I don't call him my cousin..we're really close..he had a love marriage and made a mess out of it ..he's 25 now, he got married to this girl he fell in love with cos she got pregnant, they were the same caste, she was Jat..they got married for all the right reasons though, she got pregnant though and they had to get married..the parents didn't know till afterwards, the child was born at 7 months and everyone thought that's pretty early, especially if shes healthy...and they couldn't exactly do anything after that now could they? and now he's going out with another girl and she doesn't know anything about it, ...I know he's my brother and that, but when I see him, I really hate him, I hate him, she's really nice, she's changed since she came into our family, she used to drink and everything before she was married but now she's really changed...

-he hides it and I saw him one day and I mentioned that I saw him in front of them both and he kinda looked at me..she knows something's going on, but I don't want to be the one to tell her..I've had a go at him enough times..he's upset my parents, he's upset our family a lot, like they didn't want him to get married like that, but then they agreed to that but then they fell in love, she's our caste and you knew they're getting married for the right reasons..like he stuck by her quite a bit, like he walked out of his home...

Q- you mean getting married for love? is that the right reason?

-yeah, well it isn't if you look at it from an Indian point of view but then my mum and dad thought he walked out of his home for her he cut his hair because she asked him to so we thought he must really care for her..its no harm, then she changed and now they're really

glad he married her..but you don't really think about falling in love until you see it on TV or in a film, then you think, 'Oh God! that IS romantic!', that's what it does to me, it's just that, it comes from TV really, it sort of makes you have fantasies

she quickly cuts conversation back to ..

-but now we're fed up with TV, I get more homework done now, I keep up with my schoolwork, with cable we'd just sit down, we'd keep up with the ironing though (laughs) now the ironing piles up but the homework gets going..its either the ironing or the homework!

-me and my sister do all the ironing...mum doesn't do any housework, she may cook occasionally cos she doesn't like my cooking, she works hard at work, she brings money in constantly whereas my dad, after a month he brings £8,000 in then after a week £2,000 and then for 6 months he doesn't bring anything in, so I suppose she's busy with her work

-Indian films like, they're ..you can't imagine that happening in real life..its fantasy..but then you want life to be like that so you get onto, like my sister, and say you have to call didi (term of respect for polder sister) from now on, or you have to call me 'pangi', its nice it sounds nice, you see it in films, and like you don't swear in front of visitors cos you think they never do that in films, you don't do that in front of relatives but if you have to do it behind their backs..well (laughs)...its a lot of fantasy

- ..it's ..artificial..suppose 2 brothers, they marry 2 girls and in films these 2 sister-in-laws, they always get on, they ALWAYS get on, whereas in real life they probably pull each other's eyes out

-we got it in our family as well..my mother's brother's family - the older daughter-in-law wanted my mother's other brother to marry her younger sister, so 2 brothers marry 2 sisters, whereas we went and did it the other way, we married him to a totally different girl..it

causes problems, we've done it quite a lot in our family, 2 sisters marry 2 brothers but we've noticed that evrytime that happens, when one husband and wife have a fight, the sister always runs to her sister's side and the brother to his brother's side..you see that in films, it's very common in Indian families..

-with our family there's my mother's brother and he's married to the older sister so my mother's nephews they're married to the younger sister's, so there's the husband and wife, the wife's 2 sisters are married to the husband's nephews, so when theres a fight, all the sisters, there's about 10 of them, all gang up, it's really horrible..in most families with different family marriages, the older daughter-in-law is having a fight with the younger one cos the boy didn't get married to her sister so they just move, its easier that way if you just move, like both live in separate because . you keep communications with one another and you dont fight

Q-does the mother have power over her son's marriage in films like in Southall?

-in my experience yes...the son can get round his father but not his mother...in our family, the boys half arrange the party at the end and we arrange the ceremony, my mum's family gave quite a bit when she got married they gave a fridge, a hi-fi system micro wave, they gave her 3 sets of gold, whereas my father's family only gave her 1 set of gold .. dowry is dying out...the reason I think that my mum and dad stopped giving dowries is because they've become more religious now, they've done their AMRIT now, (baptised) about 4 years ago since the storming of the Golden Temple..before that my dad was a right so and so, would you believe that he used to eat 10 pounds of meat a week? and since then he changed he started going to the temple..but now since he's started building hes started going out with his mates and having a good time altho he doesn't eat meat or drink, although he's enjoying himself he's not drinking or eating meat

KAMLESH AND HARJINDER

CULTURE - CULTURAL DIFFERENCES - INDIAN FILMS - ON BEING AN INDIAN -
ON BEING WESTERNISED - DELHI IS MORE WESTERNISED THAN SOUTHAL - LOVE
AND ROMANCE - COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE - SITA'S STORY - CLUB X CRISIS -
OR HOW TV RUNINED A MARRIAGE

(1) SITA'S STORY

why did she suddenly get married off?

it's important to understand how marriage arrangements work from a
patriarchal point of view - the key problem for the father and mother
= dowry - need to check how many daughters - how they are spaced in
family - her parents had discovered she had boyfriend - marry her
quickly before her reputation is damaged - then maybe they would have
to pay more dowry to get her married off respectably

(2) CLUB X

Quite the most astonishing story I've yet heard

The use of a video of a TV programme as evidence that prospective
husband was having an affair - when confronted denied it and family
showed him Club X tape - functions as a kind of moral tale - maybe a
paradigmatic case of TV use - the visual act has replaced the written
word as the notion of 'truth' - Tv here, replacing gossip networks -
all pervasiveness of TV - ubiquitous quality - story has mythical
dimensions - based on an incontrovertible truth that the recorded
image does not lie.

Interesting distortion of truth - confusion re- marriage certificate
not being valid for 6 weeks - sounds like a good excuse to me or
confusion about the conventions of English civil marriage ceremony.

Exerpts from discussion with Kamlesh (Sikh-Hindu, 17) Hajinder (Jat-
Sikh 18) They left school in summer 1988. They called into school to
visit and we sat in the 6th form common room, chatting about college,

school etc they were wearing their own clothes, previously I had only seen them in school uniform and the idea of culture was brought up in relation to clothes - I asked them if they would mind if I took some notes, they were amused at the idea that someone would bother to write down what they had to say

H-at home were totally one thing and at school were totally a different thing, in our dress, behaviour looks and everything, so when you go home you have to be one culture and when you come to school you're expected to be another one

K-like I'm the same at home as I am at school except in the way I dress, I'm not totally Indian at home cos my mum understands English so you find it easier to communicate with them in English than in Punjabi..but when you come to school you have to act the way the sort of English people do, dress like them, like, the way they hang around with 'other'

(my emphasis, I think she means of a different religion, caste, etc) people..like when you're at home you hang around with your own people mostly family and relatives but at school you hang around with people from different cultures you know, English, white black and coloured, not just one religion, at school its all mixed up, at home it's just one

H-but you can't really say there's such a thing as a British culture because within that you've got other people, you've got coloureds, English, Asians, blacks - Sometimes in a group at school you find each and they all mix their cultures together so you could pick up the way a Muslim talks or the way a coloured person talks or a rasta or vice versa or white people want to learn the Indian lingo

q-do you watch Indian movies?

H-yes, it makes yo aware of your own culture, sometimes you go through a whole month without watching an Indian movie..the more you don't watch them the more English you get at home - let's say you're

watching Neighbours like, we say 'this afternoon', they say 'thisavo' but I notice when my mates come round and they've been watching Neighbours and they go 'thisavo', and I go, 'what?' and I say 'You watch too much Neighbours' - and so you pick up different little things from watching

When you watch Indian films it's like your origin, it's like what you really are, like when you say 'thisavo' you're not really being yourself, you're being something that's been created on TV

-When you watch an Indian film it reminds you of what you are and when you watch an English movie you get carried away with it, like we were watching a film yesterday 'You can't buy me love' and this bloke was trying to be something he wasn't- it was set in a school and there were the Nerds who were the clever ones and the ones that were in the school football team and he wanted to be like one of them but he couldn't and that's a bit like an Indian film, it makes you realise, that's what you are and no matter what, no matter how much you change your speech or your dress, you'll always be an Asian or an Indian

-but I think watching an Indian film, like, makes you realise how important your own culture is to you cos they make you see the bad things and the good things and how they interact with one another, how it can cause pain and grief and how it can cause ..like we can't marry into another culture, like so I dont think I could ever marry into another culture cos they would have to adapt to your way or would you have to adapt to their way so that's one problem straight away so it's important to you..its like some people have married outside their caste and they're finding it really hard because the barriers are strong even when it comes to naming a baby...the girl who marries outside her caste -the family stop having anything to do with her cos its against her religion

K-unless they accept him, in Southall you find a lot of white women marrying Indian blokes, theres a lot of that - and first of all you think a white woman in a suit - Oh my God!- but you get used to it

especially now that we got the shop we can see a lot of women coming in wearing a suit, now there's one woman and I would say that now „ she's married into an Indian family she's lost what freedom she had, she's out with the kids all the time - she ties her hair back, her own way would have more freedom..it's quite surprising anyway, she speaks English to me..shes married a Hindu

-none of my brothers or sisters would marry a Sikh because of what happened Indira Gandhi, they'd always think Sikhs did that

-but where I live im surrrounded by people - I've got my muslims opposite, my sikhs next door, they're down to earth people, they won't marry another culture

H-the films now are being westernised, they all have an english words and nudity

-the old films didnt have so much violence theres always a good and a bad guy but now there's no difference between them

DELHI'S MORE WESTERNISED THAN SOUTHALL

-and I'd say that Delhi is more westernised than Southall we spent a couple of days there, the shops there are great, in Southall if you want a good clothes shop you have to go to Ealing, but it's not like that in Delhi there's a lot of English there, and they have this sort of image of English people and in India they say 'do you talk to them?' and we say 'we've got neighbours on our road that are english' and they're shocked ..

-the way Indian people are is that although they might marry into another caste I don't think they actually leave their own culture, whether it's the way they eat or dress or what they watch or whether they go to the mandir or the gurudwara - even if they're not religious they still go, like Kam shes not religious but still when it comes to the time of the year they still go, like I go every week with my mum..

-thing is like people in the small towns and villages they've been brought up strict but when you get to places like Delhi and Bombay you see men smoking and with their hair cut but when you see them on films and that they sort of talk the Indian way, a really strict Indian way, a really strong accent

-people from here are going back to India and taking their ideas with them and I think Delhi is more westernised than Southall because there you've got more of variety of things - not just suit shops and jewelry shops like in Southall

-I was quite shocked the first time I went to Delhi they've got evrything there the houses have front porches, like in America, and big open grass gardens, and the flats, you can get lost in the flats there.there are all sorts of english people

- my mums friend says don't work in Southall its a dump - work in Ealing..but you get a lot of tourists in Southall from the north especially

k- in Indian movies you find they have a romance and then you get married but actual life is that people find you the boy and then you get married and then the romance begins and when you come down here, even in American and English films its romance and then marriage

-in indian movies the girl, say she goes away and falls in love with someone, and then she comes back to her home, and then her parents start to get her married off, and then she causes a fuss, she gets depressed and cries, and she calls her loved one and then he comes down and marries her and that's how it is in most of them but now you get all the girls falling in love and then they get married

H-you can start falling in love with someone you don't really know but the problem is when you're married you've got to learn to love them

Harjinder then told me SITA'S STORY

sita was in love with sati and they split up - then she started going out with amrit (Harjinders cousin) - then she gets engaged and she used to start saying bad things about him - he wasn't very nice to begin with, and I used to say to her, Sati don't say those things you're going to have to spend the rest of your life with this guy - but Sita didn't really think about when you marry him

-the boy comes round and the girl sits in the room and they talk maybe for an hour and they come down and later the boy gives the decision - the boy's side has all the power - but it's not something that you can talk about for 15 minutes - it's a decision that's going to affect the rest of your life..she used to tell us these things..she'd say I'm not getting married for 2 years and now she's getting married within 2 months of the court ceremony

-I think the thing about TV is that a lot of Asian girls like Asian boys but they like English boys as well and sometimes they don't like Indian boys

K-especially the boys you get in Southall

H- either they're involved in a gang or they're too shy to come forward but the thing about English boys is that they're open, they're not like Indian boys - they have to sort it out with their mates first - make sure their mates think its all right (Sita and Sati scenario) in the end that's why they broke up - his mates took the piss out of him and her

-she used to say she loved Sati and we used to say 'what do you mean love?'..cos she switched and changed her mind between sati, amrit and her husband..and we used to say 'if you like Sati why are you going out with amrit?' and now she's marrying a bloke - she used to say she didnt like amrit, I mean how can you keep changing your mind..of course we used to say its up to you it's your business

K-especially with her family background, her dad's not working, her mum's working every hour of the day to pay for the mortgage, the younger brother's been put back at school a year

the mother sort of forced her..I suppose they just wanted her married off..I suppose a lot of Indian parents find that the biggest problem is to marry the girl because of the dowry and that ..after the court marriage there can be a lot of problems

Kam's sister and her husband were having problems - it was his mother's fault - they visited the pundit (priest) - mum fasted for my sister and they went away from his family, problems with mother-in-law

CLUB X CRISIS

Harj's cousin, 18 years had a court marriage in Ealing, they had their engagement at the mandir - he never talked to her - the mother said she wouldn't marry her son at age 22 - she had gone to the pundit who had checked the stars - he said age 22 was unlucky - so they waited until he was 23 - Then one evening her family were sitting down watching Club X - that pop programme - and they saw him on the TV - and she couldn't believe it - he was smoking, drinking, AND KISSING A GIRL ON TV - and she goes - I don't think it's him, it was lucky cos they taped it - and they kept rewinding it - and she kept saying it's not him and then the parents came and said - yes it is him - and they'd already paid £4,000 for the hall, the caterers, the band - at first he denied all that - even though it was proven on the video - but she managed to get out of it because the court marriage certificate - it's not proper until they send you the certificate - but she wasted her time - she waited 2 years to marry him and now her family - they're all ill - and his family knew he had a girl - and she's had a breakdown cos she couldn't handle it.

FIELDIARY 23.10.90

Trip to Brunel with A-Level Sociology students
Reconstruction of conversation in the mini-bus on the way
there between Perminder, Gurinder and Baljit.

DIWALI DISCO AT HIPPODROME IN LONDON

G-we went to the hippodrome it was wicked the guys were so
hunky it was such a small area and you could feel all the
guys bums

P-you're so randy gurinder

G-well it was great

Q-who was there

Goh a lot of people sammy and raj and diraj and a whole load
were there

Q-did you get asked to dance

G-yeah loads of times

G-we went at 12 pm and we didn't get home until 9pm we
messed about in London and had a hamburger and that

Perminder was the excuse we said it was her birthday and
that we were going out after school

G-they were checking everyone for spliffs

my trainers were a bit large I borrowed my brotehrs and the
woman at the desk said - they're a bit big for you - what
have you got in them?

laughs

P-I was freaking man they had cameras there and I thought
God what if we're being filmed coming out and it's on the
news and our parents are sitting there

laughs

G-they (The Hippodrome - for Dat time Bhangra discos)

advertise so much don't they - hey, remember the 23

december were going at xmas

P- did you see the guy who got swallowed by a shark in home
and away last night?

(chorus of yea, pathetic)

G- oh did you hear about the woman who was killed in
Southall yesterday she got off the bus and was masecrated by
a lorry she was an old woman

P-and did you hear about the guy who was killed in the Half
Way House (pub) - a west indian guy he had an indian
girlfriend - i think it was her family who done him in - it
came on Sunrise (radio)

B-like the man who came out of hospital and his wife hired a
hit man to kill him

G-why

B-for the insurance money i think

P-yeah did you see that documentary about 'Women who love
too much' - her bloke didn't like her kids so she killed
them for him

(chorus - wow)

P-did you see neighbours

(yeah - screams)

Bronwyn's being a sap innit? she she's so soppy weeping and
all that

(chorus - yeah)
B- Des is being a sap too
G- yeah, not letting her have that dream wedding
B- it's good that Henrys marrying Bronwyn
yeah
G- that's three weddings now
B-i think Jane might jack him in, he's being such a sap
G-no i dont think so
P-oh i went to see 'Ghost' it's wicked! Patrick Swayze is
not so hunky - his head is so big man - its too big for his
body but Demi Moore she's sooo pretty
G-she's married to Bruce Willis
P-you can see why
G-do you like bruce willis
P-yeas man i bought a whole magazine just because of him
G-did anyone watch the Charles Bronson film on satuday
night?
P-no i went to see Presumed Innocence - that's so crap man!
it's bad - don't go and see it
[..]
G-when we go up to boys we think were just being friendly
but they get the wrong idea sometimes
P-its all for a laugh

HOW DIWALI BECAME A CELEBRATION OF DIRTY DANCING

DIRTY DANCING -the film traces a girls passage from innocence to maturity (from adolescence to adulthood) in a purely fantastical way which probably counts for it being the most popular and talked about film of the year.

Set in an american holiday camp in 1950s, dancing is the key activity especiall 'dirty dancing' - erotic and sensual.

The essential values are friendship and loyalty but there is a conflict between obedience to parents and loyalty to friend - which the kids relate to

The girl's friend gets pregnant
She stands in for her as dancing partner to Swayze
She helps her friend, gets her the money for an abortion from her father - but doesn'T tell him what the money is for -simply a friend who's in trouble and she says 'trust me dad'

Initially they are simply dancing partners but you see their intimacy grow

Problem arises when her father, a doctor, is called to the scene of the boched abortion, he thinks Swayze is the man responsible

Girl and Swayze become more intimate and end up in bed together

A women who fancies Swayze sees her coming from his room in the morning and in a fit of jealousy gets him accused of theft and he has to leave the holiday camp but not before revenging the cad who actually got the girl pregnant

The girl stands by him and pleads his innocence to her father and the manager, when they don't believe her she puts herself at risk by saying he couldn't have done it cos she was with him all night on the night of the theft

Her father is shocked and gives her the silent treatment and Swayze leaves

Shes a 'daddy's girl' and can't bear his disapproval nor the pain of separation from her new love (Swayze)

He returns gloriously on the last night of the holiday camp when they are having a concert at which everyone is really bored and her boring sister is doing a dreadful act

She is sat in a corner with her parents

He goes straight to her and says 'no-one puts my baby in a corner'

He takes her hand, stops the proceedings, grabs the mike and tells evryone he's gonna do the last dance, as he always does, then they do their 'Time of my Life', it's a flamenco/ramba mix intricate steps that for much of the film they have been practicing together

The party takes off everyone is spellbound by the romantic magic of their dancing as he flies off the stage and she flies into his arms and he lifts her at arms length above his head.

It is the most pefect fantasy -resolution of a teenager's dilemma

The fear of sex is taken away by the dancing
For much of the film they remain unintimate in that the emphasis is on learning the correct steps.
The dance is so sensual and erotic that a sexual charge between them eventually develops but it is not the raison d etre of their alliance

Love grows from the respect they have for eachother
He respects her loyalty and says so publicly in the finale and we know that she respects him for his liveliness and devotion to dancing plus he is a good friend to the pregnant girl and also stands by her

Thus first sexuality then love takes its 'natural' course
the only problem remaining then is daddy, being daddy's girl she desperately needs his approval if she is to be happy

In the end the father discovers that the boy he thought so highly of, the medical student was really the man who dumped the girl when she was pregnant.

All misunderstandins are cleared up and the father admits he is wrong in front of them both and thereby declares his approval

The parents upon seeing the professionalism of their dancing are chuffed and the mother says 'I think she gets it from me'

People are so impressed and taken with the dancing that they throw off their coats even the two elderly ladies with furs and start dancing

At the Diwali concert the dance which won most applause was then the 'Time of my Life' which amit and jaspreet peformed.

THE DIWALI CONCERT-They rehearsed everynight after school for six weeks (just like in the film) They learned the steps from the video by repeatedly watching it
The whole process of rehearsing began to simulate the film itself in that they faced quite few problems, especially in getting the steps right and the 'lift' most of all. They could not practice the lift on a lake but went to the next best place Southall Park and practiced it using benches

-Their performance (which i've now got on video) was an outstanding success

"you never see this kind of thing you know boys and girls dancing together in a concert"

The audience were whistling, shouting, hooting, clapping

I went to Joy's house to watch the video of the concert with all the performers over half term - as I was further intrigued by the line up (see concert programme)

-it was a diwali concert and traditionally the religious angle would be emphasised and only Indian dances and songs would be performed

-yet there were an equal number of indian and english dances

- number 6 is an Indian version of Michael Jackson's 'Thriller' to which the girls do an east-west mix

-the routines were devised by the girls themselves from steps they knew and improvised from weddings and films

-no 3 was a straight copy from a film

-boys don't usually dance at concerts and so amit was brave to do so and was praised for this especially as he performed so well

-he is going out with a third year girl but clearly there is a special bond between him and jaspreet who sat well apart but you could sense a mutual interest

-they said the film would be more appreciated by girls than boys

-I asked during the video what Dosangh (deputy head and strict sikh) thought of it and they said he complained

-what did he do, i asked, and one girl replied 'he threw off his turban'

- everyone laughed and i didnt get the joke until i saw the film itself (which we watched after the concert video) and everyone laughed at the end when the old ladies with the fur coats threw off their furs and joined in

-Dosangh has become the bete noir, he symbolises everything that kids hypocrisy, strictness, no relations between boys and girls

"if he saw you talking to a boy in the lower school he'd have you in his office he was always lecturing us like don't wear skirts, don't cut your hair, don't talk to boys, don't give your telephone number to people"

-The concert was outrageous in his eyes - he found the dancing too provocative and hated the english bits in the indian dancing - hes like a grandfather to them - of the worst kind

-but what surprised me was the openness and freedom with which the kids expressed themselves physically through dance

-dirty dancing seems to have liberated them - just like it did the charcaters in the film

-i wonder how they square this parents' values which would frown upon such provocative dancing,

- none of the kids would have shown the video to their parents except two and they were the younger girls doing the indian dancing but the older girls said they would have been able to show it if they hadn't appeared in it

-parents would be concerned about their reputation

-also many parents would not approve of the Time of my Life as it's a boy girl dance

-they don't have to square D D with parents since they are distinct spheres (parental and peer cultures) in many respects

and as long as they get enough freedom to attend the odd disco and go out occasionally that's all most want

-most don't go further than kissing in courtship even though for many the main preoccupation is relations with boys this seems to be much more true of girls than boys

-boys on the whole tend to be more fearful of girls than vice versa - boys go around in groups and depend on the group much more

-life weaves its way into films and films into life it would not have been possible to understand the impact of the Time of my Life had i not seen the film and i daresay that's most would have seen it in the absence of their parents

-they know its only fiction and can indulge in the fantasy and catharsis of magical resolutions in a highly entertaining form, friendship, sexuality, love and parents all at the same time.

-the dynamics of life at this age are driven by how you negotiate your friends and your parents

-if you discover sexuality and love at the same time maybe its too powerful -is that why some girls become obsessive?

-leading a double life at this age is not that difficult but many girls at home have major responsibilities in the household cooking and housework etc and are not allowed very much freedom to experiment

-when there is too much control this causes great anxiety rebellion is not really a feature most dont the consequences are too great

-watching self on video is startling - hating ones voice or appearance - shyness and embarrassment yet the ineluctable drive to see yourself as others might is so different to a photo

most of the comments when watching were witty or otherwise about peoples physical appearance
intensifies awareness of physical appearance self and others

"imagine you can do a dance intimate like that with a boy but in public you have to stand on opposite sides of the street while waiting for a bus in case parents or someone might see you"

-these kids are so loyal and supportive to each other maybe because they have so much to lose if they have an indiscreet or unloyal friend who might start gossiping behind their back and tainting their name or their family's name - everyone carries their familys identity in Southall - girls especially - many fights caused by name calling - friendship bonds are fierce and strong

-the film becomes the context of the fantasy
they know every word of the film - they can say the word along with the film - and the actions

also learn other dances from watching videos

-they are unaware or unwilling to admit its derivative they want it to be seen as themselves - as individuals

but i am often alarmed at the surprising degree of consensus between them.

WATCHING THE MAHABHARATA WITH MALATI'S FAMILY

FAMILY DETAILS

The household consists of 9 people; mother and father in their late 40's, Munni (f/23), Sewanti (f/21), Sefali (f/19), Dilip (m/17), Malati (f/14), Lipi (f/12) and Ranjit (m/11). Both parents and the two eldest daughters work full time in catering and cleaning jobs (unskilled manual). They come from Bangladesh originally but lived in India for a few years at the time of independence which the older girls painfully remember. They live in a smart terraced house in old Southall, 'the best house in the street with the double glazed windows' as Malati proudly described it. In the hallway is a plastic sheet where shoes are put upon entry and all the family live barefoot in the main, warm and softly carpeted thro-lounge. Photos of the family are plotted along the sideboard, on top of which are large pictures of Vishnu, Lakshmi and Ganesha, draped with tinsel.

ARRANGEMENTS

I had approached Malati at school and asked if it would be possible to watch the Mahabharata with her family. I knew she was Hindu and that they might be watching it. I had chosen her as in the two years that I had taught her I found her a very warm, happy, open and articulate girl who I got on well with. She phoned to tell me that I should come at 6 so we could chat a bit before the programme. Sefali spoke to me politely enquiring and assessing my intentions and reasons for wanting to watch it.

ARRIVAL

I arrived late due to the heavy traffic with box of chocolates

and plant. Upon entering I was greeted by Malati and shown into the living room. In turn I greeted all the family who remained somewhat aloof apart from Sefali who acted as intermediary between on the one hand Malati and the younger siblings and on the other her parents and older siblings who were probably bemused but uncertain, even a touch suspicious of me. The father, a very dark eyed man in dhoti and shirt smiled and moved to the far end of the room where the mother was sitting. I offered the plant to the mother who was sat, cross-legged, elbow on knee in the corner wearing a sari and blanket. She took the plant, only faintly smiling and immediately disregarded it placing it on the floor as if slightly dismissive of the gift.

I was invited to sit on the sofa and began chatting to the children. The parents sat in the back half of the room, observing us. I felt strongly that I hadn't yet been acknowledged by the parents. Blind date was on and silence soon fell as all eyes became glued to the screen. We didn't talk. As the girl on the Blind date was about to choose her partner, the mother, as if forgetting my presence and her self-imposed silence since my arrival, shouted, "number two". Sure enough the girl chose number 2. The kids marvelled at their mother's correct guesses and indeed so did I.

My thoughts strayed as the family watched, mainly in silence, probably partly due to my strange presence. I wondered what the parents think about this game show of dating and playing with the rituals of courtship. How different to their own experiences of courtship it must be to watch these, mainly white, couples coo and flirt and exhibit themselves. And yet how similar in the openness with which a potential partner's suitability is assessed. As if there was a difference in the style but not in the underlying approach to conventional courtship arrangements.

In retrospect, I now think that the evening's eating arrangements were disturbed by my late arrival. Maybe that was the reason for the slightly frosty reception I do not know when the parents ate for when Safali served me food while watching tv, I became aware that only the younger children ate. I quietly enquired whether the others were going to eat and Malati explained that it's not considered right to eat while a religious film is on. Malati was disappointed at my late arrival, her sisters had earlier teased her that the teacher was only joking, Malati even lied to protect herself and myself saying that i had rung up in the morning to say I couldn't come. I felt embarassed for being one-half hour late.

When the mhbarta came on it was difficult to follow because having relaxed in my company the children were shouting out 'who's that?' all trying, unsuccessfully to explain who was who to me. The casting had the immediate impact of rendering their dearly loved Gods unrecognizable and this confusion was expressed in the loud exchanges of "shut up", "that's Ganesha!", "Look that's Vishnu", "No, it isn't! shut up!". The room was filled with a sea of noise and this very fast-moving and complicated opening to the narrative ran adrift in its midst.

The children appealed to their mother for help but she was unable to advise us. It was at this point I realised that she understood and spoke very little English. But the children continued to talk and shout unreproached by their mother, who was probably disarmed at the production and maybe slightly embarassed at not being able to understand and explain to me what was happening.

On saturday nights the mother and children usually watch a Hindi feature film followed by a 'God Film'. It is not unusual

that viewing will keep them up until 3 am for once a 'God film' is on you cannot turn it off or leave it until it is finished. The father and eldest son came and went all evening. They seemed to have an active life outside the home. But it also might be because they didn't like the Mahabharata.

In fact not only did they not recognise the characters, the story didnot begin where they expected it to. However, mini narratives within the whole were deeply familiar to them as the events leading up to the marriage of Rama and Sita, particulalry the contest with the bow. Sefali was irritated and puzzled, "You can't even recognise Krishna, normally he's blue, because in fact he's black...but i know some of these stories I just can't remember them or recognise them properly". They knew parts but had no conception of the whole.

Their knowledge of the Mahabharata derives from the popular Hindi versions of tales form The Ramayana a much later account of the lives of the Gods. Such films have a very long history and have developed specific conventions which, one might argue constitutes a system of representation in itself that has been ever increasingly popularised. The whole dilemma revolved around identification of the characters names, if you could identify the character you could then attempt to set them in the whole for example Satiavati and Kunti were confused and there was argument about the pronounciation of names. (S) "It would be better if it were in hindi, then at least we'd understand, mum would, and even though we don't know that much Hindi, religious Hindi Sanskrit, we would know enough to follow [...] "It's all about loyalty and respect and that meaning is carried better in Hindi". The only comments uttered by the father was "it's not putting the message across, it's not carrying the meaning" (continued)

FIELD DIARY 6.1.89

VISIT TO THE DHANIS

Arrived 4.15 with box of chocolates.

Mother, Munni, Sewanti and Malati out shopping

Sefali, Lipi and Ranjit greeted me.

They showed me smashed window, someone had thrown a brick in it the previous night, they suspect it might be gang boys who their elder brither is mixed up with but aren't sure.

We talked about xmas, Sefali watched a lot of TV since next week would be studying, they asked if I'd seen Grease 2, they didn't think it was as good as Grease 1, singing and dancing routines were poor in comparison.

Ranjit wanted me to read his stories which I did and said he wanted to be a writer, he writes very well for his age (10) Dad came in smiling, asked me what I thought of Ranjit's work, 'excellent', I said, he was pleased.

Lipi puts on Indian movie for her dad who sits and watches until he receives phone call.

Ranjit recounted several funny scenes from the film 'The Search for the Greatest Athlete' (USA movie) to the amusement of all.

They then asked if I'd seen the portrait of Amitabh and told how he had suffered a drop in popularity since he became involved in politics.

His most recent film was about the farmers in Bihar and exploitation, Amitabh played the role of activist

encouraging them to form trade unions to protect themselves
(Ranjit interjects 'I'm going to be a politician')
Indian people don't like his films now because they're too
serious not the right amount of dance, action, romance,
especially music, the content is too serious.

Dad goes off and we continue to watch the movie it's about
friendship, 2 men previously friends fall out because of a
dispute over land, their respective children are in love,
and are prevented from marrying due to feud (Romeo and
Juliet)

One of the men's sisters is being beaten by her husband, he
discovers him in a 'den of iniquity drinking', gambling and
cavorting with white women (read whores)

He won't do him any harm, Sefali explains, because Indian
people don't believe in divorce and if he leaves her she
will be like widowed therefore he will try persuasion before
he does anything very harmful.

Epitaph at end about friendship.
(name of film???)

We go into kitchen to start preparing dinner, chopping
garlic and ginger I realise that I am hampered because they
want to talk about Neighbours and Home and Away and I don't
know the characters and stories, clearly I need to start
watching.

They don't like Kylie, think she's a show off, Jason's
different

Sefali prefers Madonna and Michael Jackson 'they've got charisma'.

They tell me stories about the ghost in the drama studio at school

Sefali tells me about when she thought she saw a spirit in India one night floating on the surface of the land (she had fallen in a ditch and wet her clothes, reurning home on her own to change, she was scared, she saw an apparition'

She told me she wanted to be a teacher and what advice I'd give her, I said unless she's got a great buring desire to be one she might consider alternatives.

She compared the status of teachers here with India 'there they worship you', she likes children they're easier to understand than adults. She wants to try everything, she's studying Psychology, English and Biology and is the first academic one in the family making a break with the two elder sisters whom, she regrets didn't have the same opportunities as her (parents needed their income so they had to go to work).

She tells of how the family lived in 'East Pakistan' and left at independence. Elder sisters remember people lying around dead and wounded.

Father got a job in India but when he got a job and house here they moved (Sefali was 8)

She said 'I'm so angry inside, I want to do well and I want the younger ones to do well'

She acts as a kind of mother. She knows how to cook and do

things around the house better than older sisters, 'because I used to hang around my mother all the time'.

They return from shopping at 7pm. they all go and sit in lounge.

Dilip comes in with black eye, seemingly proud of it, he'd been in a fight

Mother is friendly, small woman hardly speaks English, did try to learn but full time employment prevented her from pursuing it, she tries to talk to me in English, I don't understand, both slightly embarrassed but still friendly.

I get a cooking lesson

Malati talks of how they visited friend's house and the women of the house was discussing the possibility of Sefali for her son, Malati teases her to which she cries "I've told my parents I'm not getting married until I'm 30, of course they won't agree", although her father will allow her to study for as long as she likes because 'you have nothing but education' it can protect you against fate and misfortune'.

One wonders how this poor man will cope marrying 5 daughters off successfully.

I offer to cut the meat since no one likes doing it, Sefali asks her mum if that's all right that a guest should do so explaining that I'm having a cookery lesson and she agrees. They all have tea and muffins (it's about 8pm I've been there nearly 4 hours and I'm dying for a cup of tea but haven't yet been offered one)

I finish cutting the meat and joyfully have tea, muffin and samosa.

Sewanti is a very gloomy sister, she's ill, she's vegetarian and very religious, the doctor says the whole family don't eat enough meat and lack haemoglobins, they are all taking medicine to compensate. Last time I was there Mother and Sewanti were very ill. Mother has had several operations, throat, stomach etc didnt like to pry too much as to what it was.

They treat mother nicely, she's a diminutive woman they tease her after buying earrings that she's trying to make herself look younger and point to the irony of her not wanting to wear red because she thinks shes too old for it. Mother asks me if I like earrings. They complain that shopping takes all day saturday since mother hunts bargains, goes to the other end of the high street for better vegetables and strikes a hard bargain with vendors.

The family start watching an Indian movie while we continue in the Kitchen, Sefali, Malati, lippi and Ranjit intermittently. The door is closed and an atmosphere of intimacy and secrecy reigns as they tell me about when their parents and elder sisters went to India leaving Sefali, Malati, Dilip and Lipi on their own (with £1,000 for 6 weeks to spend on food) they ate so much, mainly veggie burgers that when the parents returned they were astounded at how fat they had all become.

A friend of Sewantis had sought shelter with them during their parents absence, a sikh girl whose misdemeanours with boyfriend had precipitated her parents into arranging a

hasty marriage against her wishes. One day whilst she was hiding out with the Dhani's, her mother arrived in floods of tears, wailing and blaming them for her daughters disappearance, a very neat operation began as she searched every room and wardrobe looking for the daughter, Lipi went next door to ask neighbours if she could go to their house across the adjoining balconies. Images of the girl escaping out of the double glazed bedroom window onto the kitchen ceiling and across into the neighbour's house via a back bedroom window, came before my eyes as I remembered the gymnastics of Balbir in accomplishing midnight meetings with Reikha - its all so Romeo and Juliet like.

(continued)

THE FUNERAL OF KULDIP SINGH SEKHON
(THE DOMINION CENTRE)

Arrived at the Dominion Centre at 12.15. pm with Mohinderpal. Groups of people were standing outside some waiting, others seemingly hesitant or reluctant to enter, like Sita Bhatti, a friendly student from last year, now married, and restrained by her female in-laws to polite formality:

"we're a bit scared to go in", she said.

Earlier that morning I had met Dennis, a white caribbean neighbour outside the house who said "you better steer clear of Southall today there's going to be a march through the streets, no cars will be able to get by, it's for that Indian cabbie who got murdered, remember..I believe they're going to SHOW the body, these Indians do that you know, it's bloody disgusting" another white man joining our conversation looked appalled at the idea "but he's been dead for nearly three months, bloody hell!". Perhaps the news that the body was to be shown accounted in part for the seeming reluctance of people outside to enter.

Mohinderpal and I entered the centre, meeting some boys from school and Patrick from SMG all jacketed in red, acting as ushers:
"You better get in quick, it's filling up in there you won't get a place to sit" said Patrick.

That surprised me, I didn't really know what to expect but hadn't imagined we would be seated in the main hall. As it happened we were asked to get out of our seats almost immediately in order to allow the older folk a place. I spotted the Headmaster who faintly acknowledged me. He was the only other member of staff that I could see. The response of most white staff to a request for money to send a wreath to the family on behalf of the school had been less than warm.

I moved up to the front on the right hand side. It was only then that my eyes fell upon the large image of Kuldip Sekhon, an image by now so familiar having been displayed on every wall in Southall for the last week on a poster announcing the 'March Against Racism'. Flowers decked the front around a stand awaiting the arrival of the coffin. Bali (SMG) sat at the front with some men. I noticed that her hair seemed very well coiffured as if by a hairdresser, as if expecting to be seen. I then realised that this was to be no quiet event. Television crews arrived as more people piled into the hall.

David (SMG) announced that Mr. Sekhon's body would arrive at 12.45

"and we would ask you all to file past the coffin to pay your respects and through the courtyard to the car park and await there for the ordered procession..we urge you all to comply with these instructions as a mark of respect for the family...everybody is invited to the Gurdwara (Havelock Rd) where food will be provided all day...in accordance with the wishes of the family no papers will be sold in the hall, no collections of money will be made except for the Sekhon family this is not solely a march and rally it is first and foremost a funeral."

Several people came to the front to offer their condolences including Gurdeep Singh and Mr Sidhu from the London mini-cab association. There were repeated requests for orderly behaviour throughout the day as if trouble were expected. Mr. Randeer Sandhu, a local writer, sang a very moving tribute to Mr. Sekhon and his family.

Mike Bennet(teacher at Featherstone High school) recited two poems he had written, prefacing the recital with "It is for those people I work with, who refuse to do what this terrible tragedy asks them to do and that is to look into their hearts.. and finished on the note "what the mind won't admit the heart cannot turn to".

Mr Khabra (IWA) paid his condolences, said that Mr. Sekhon had visited him only a week before his death about 'a matter' and went on to

deplore the brutality of this murder..."so much hatred for a man who did not belong to the same race, the same colour" and he pledged to fight racism in this country "we must unite to fight racism".

Bali then announced the arrival of the coffin "It is the wish of the family that the body be shown but I would like to remind you of the nature in which Kuldip died, he was stabbed 54 times, and those of us that have seen the body know that it is in a very bad condition but unfortunately it is the wish of the family that they want the coffin open...Before we bring the coffin I would like to call a rep from Ealing NUT". A woman expressed her condolences and solidarity with the fight to combat racism.

Suresh spoke about 'a rumour that had been spreading that there would be trouble at the the march' and tried to assure everyone that there would not be...He continued to express horror at racial killings over the last 15 years in England and urged everyone to attend the court hearing on the following Friday to ensure that justice is done and announced that there would be a national demonstration at the time of the trial organised by the Sekhon Family Support group.

The family arrived, the mother head bent in anguish, surrounded by her five daughters, bewildered and wide-eyed, staring into the crowd, as if disbelieving the spectacle before them. An elderly, white haired woman, Mr. Sekhon's mother, barely able to stand, supported by a woman followed. The family sat in front of the crowd, a flood of emotion erupted as those present beheld this vision of grief. The women, sat on the right near me, elderly, white scarves on their heads, burst into loud fits of crying. It was at this moment more than ever before or indeed since that the full horror of this ugly murder and its consequences was most forcefully brought home. For an immeasurable moment silence in the head, shock in the heart the cruelty of the world struck hard.

As the coffin was brought into the hall, the cameras, like mitraillettes poised for action, jostled for the 'best' angle. It

seemed to me sacriligious. Were they there to gape and gloat? were we all there to gape and gloat? I felt sick. A loud thud on the floor. Someone had fainted. "And that won't be the last one to faint", said Mike Bennet. A woman came and stood so close to me, crushing me against the wall. I thought I would throw up over her but didn't. As the family filed past the body. You could not see ahead for the crowds and cameras surging forth. One woman turned to me "Some people seem to think it's a fete".

Someone nudged me to move forward. I stood but the streams of people from the other line gave no opening. I was pushed forward. I was scared. Three Feathers girls, fourth years, were in front of me arguing

"Come on"

"I can't, I don't want to see the body"

"Don't be so stupid, you've got to",

"Miss", she turned to me pleading

"Don't, if don't want to" I said

She and her friend turned and left

The file was moving swiftly past the body. Befre I knew it my eyes fell upon the face. He had a turban and glasses and a white sheet was pulled up over his mouth. His skin was dark purple, almost black with a leathery, plastic quality.

A feeling of relief prevailed among the small groups gathered in the courtyard outside. It seemed somehow appropriate that the rain was lashing down relentlessly and the wind raged wildly and wickedly as if in sympathy.

"Did you see the face miss?", this question, which was to be repeated so frequently throughout the day, made me wince.

"It had gone very dark, hanna!", said Kirinjit

Mohinderpal arrived, "ahhhh, did you see it miss?, what were those two holes on his cheeks?"

"those were his nostrils", interjected Kirpal

"no they weren't, that's where they done all those what do you call them 'otopsies', they had to do so many".

The two girls who had refused the sight rushed up

"Did you see it? what was it like?"

"Well you didn't see very much cos he had a turban on and glasses cos his eyes were rotting and they had a sheet over his mouth cos that was decaying"

"Well it's nearly three months since he died"

"They shouldn't have kept the body so long, why did they keep the body so long?"

"Cos they had to keep doing 'otopsies what you call it post mortem thing".

"You know she's pregnant Mrs. Sekhon"

"never"

"yeah, my mum told me. She knows someone who knows Mrs. Sekhon"

"My mum used to work with Mr. Sekhon at SAS, they do catering for British Airways. you know he was only doing cabbying part time to bring a bit extra in and you know the day he was murdered was his last day there he was going to finish cabbying"

"And you know the day it happened, when the call came it was this other bloke's turn to go but he had to get home early to take his wife shopping or something and Kuldip Sekhon said he would go"

"fucking hell, that was bad luck, init"

"It could have been anybody you see"

A man came up and asked us to move into the car park where people were gathering for the march. Earlier on in the hall it was a procession and now it was a march.

"look at those winoes, what are they doing standing there"

"they look lke they could do with a drink"

"They were inside and went to look at the body"

Two black women fought with their umbrella as it was trying to take off in the wind

"look at those women laughing, how can they?"

As I looked to the right of the carpark I noticed the flock of traveller's caravans which were parked along the wall. The silhouettes of women and children could be seen through the steamed up rain beaded windows. I wondered what they were making of all this. They never emerged.

Amerjit, surrounded by 3 Feathers 5th year boys, like the queen bee, flurried over to the little group of 4th. year girls and mohinderpal who had congregated around me as if seeking some sort of protection.

"Hallo miss, have you been inside, we've just come out but we're not sure if we're going on the march".

The four of them retreated and conducted an intense mini conference, heads together as if drinking from the same bowl, while Kirinjit said

'I'm not going on the march, my dad told me not to, he said people would be throwing stones'

The mini conference over Amerjit joined us

"we've decided we're not going", Amerjit announced

"O.K!", I said, "see you tomorrow"

The car park began to fill up and look like a political rally. By now a group of 10 kids had gathered around me, I think they felt more secure in the company of a known adult. I think many of them were scared but trying to brave it out. While we waited for the 'procession' to take off they spent the time spotting who was there from school. they seemed especially interested in spotting teachers and especially uninterested in spotting siblings. Mr. Kramer the Biology teacher was spotted, he was shouting something down a loudspeaker which we couldn't hear but presumably was trying to 'raise an atmosphere' for the 'march'.

Amerjit returned

"Miss, we've decided that we're coming now"

"what made you change your mind", I enquired

"well, we thought we'd pay our respects and go along with you but I'm not protesting, I'm not going to carry one of those banners, those men are pushing them into everyone's hands, how do we KNOW that it was a racist killing? we don't know that for sure do we?"

"well there was no money taken and he was stabbed 54 times you know" said a boy in the group

"yes but he hasn't been on trial yet and anyway this is his funeral procession i don't agree with this march, there's bound to be a white backlash"

"Yeah that's for sure", said her Hersh (her male friend)

"all this is just going to stir up more trouble between Asians and whites"

"That's right", says Amerjit, "white people are going to get angry when they see this"

"But it's not so much people in Southall who'll suffer, it's Asian people living elsewhere, that's what these people who are protesting don't realise, it's Asians in Northolt and Greenford and those kind of places who will suffer, white people will start getting at them"

"the other reason we didn't want to go was because we were getting a lot of pressure from some 6th. formers at the debating society at school and we didn't want to come because of that, we wanted our own reasons for coming, we don't want people ramming their ideas down our throats, in anycase we've proved that we can stand up to them and even though they are powerful speakers and very persuasive we've shown that we can argue back and get our point of view across.

The march took off and Amerjit's head was off in all directions spotting who was and who was not there "Oh God look there are all the Holy Smokes, I hope they don't see me, they might tell my dad I'm here, can you see them lined up against the wall and look there's my cousin, he's really nice, oh no he mustn't see me, my dad would be furious if he knew".

As we approached the hill Amerjit was becoming increasingly furious with those who were shouting and chanting 'Down with racism!'. She rushed toward a man in his fifties who was shouting anti-racist slogans in panjabi, she addressed him in panjabi

"have you no respect, you shouldn't be chanting, this is his funeral, the family didn't want any chanting, you should show more respect"
The man's mouth dropped and a look of guilt besmirched his face. A little later on I noticed him hand over the loudspeaker. I didn't see him chant again.

"they shouldn't have had the funeral and the march on the same day", she said, it's not right, it makes me want to cry, look at them, they show no respect, even though i say it myself some indians are so ignorant"

A little further on she approached a rather threatening looking large man

"Why are you chanting? don't you have any respect? thre family did not want people to chant, this is his funeral"

He was less easily persuaded

"we can show respect and protest at the same time"

"No! I don't think you can"

"Listen we have to shout to let everyone know that we won't take this anymore, we have to fight to show our strength and solidarity in the fight against racism!"

"But not today, why don't you do it another day?"

"Because then we won't get heard", he turned away and continued shouting.

For the third time she approached someone to make her protest at their protest. It was a woman who was chanting in Urdu

"Listen", she said a little more calmly than on the other occassions

"don't you think we should show a little more respect to Kuldip Sekhon?"

The woman looked startled

"I don't think people should be shouting or chanting, it should be peaceful and quiet to show our sorrow later we can show anger"

" I don't even know exactly what I'm chanting" she said

"but we have to get our voices heard" the woman looked puzzled and changed the subject as if needing time to think about it

"where are you from? " the woman with black headscarf asked

"I'm at Featherstone High and this my teacher, where are you from?"

"I'm from the Asian Women's Centre", she replied

she continued having reflected on Amerjit's appeal to her sense of principles "but Kuldip will hear our voices, his spirit lives, he is with us now"

"But will he be happy to hear people shouting and chanting at his funeral, he will think we have let him down that we have not shown him respect"

"But in another way", said the woman, "we are showing him respect, look at all these people here, they have come here for him, God is giving him respect like this because he has gathered people together to fight against a just cause, God has chosen to give him respect in this way"

Amerjit remained unconvinced

Mohinder and Chetan who had been following Amerjit and I through the procession and had witnessed Amerjit's protests whispered in my ear

"I don't agree with her", he said, eyeing her rather disparagingly, "you can protest and pay respect at the same time, look miss, Chetan's

been on work experience at SMG and he's been helping out with the Sekhon Family support Group, did you know that his girl firend's been charged as well with obstructing the course of justice"

"What did she do?", I asked

Chetan turned and with a look of disgust on his face said "she washed his clothes" firing the words like bullits.

"Isn't it amazing Miss. all the shops are shut, it's surprising cos there's a lot of mean people eager to make money in Southall you know" Mohinder said tittering

"They probably shut cos they had to or were afraid of getting their shops smashed up, people thought there would be trouble you know".

The march ended infront of Fenner Brockway where a political rally was held, some 50 people were present. Groups from Edinburgh, Leeds, Manchester spoke of 'racist' killings in their areas, of support groups that have been set up about the need to unite and fight racism they railed against such murders.

It all seemed slightly incongruous. I thought 'you can't kill diseased minds by shouting slogans in their absence. You can't cure thwarped and evil hearts with protest marches. You can't bring back Kuldip Sekhon with a political rally which sets out never to forget him or all the other racist murders. Oh the best laid schemes of mice and men.....but let's hope they do more than resow the seeds of hatred in other's hearts.

'NOT THE TURKEY TYPE': CHRISTMAS, THE FAMILY AND TELEVISION

It might be considered that Christmas is not a festival celebrated by families in Southall since it is a Christian feast and one of the western cultural tradition. Thus in a religious and calendrical sense it would appear to bear little relevance to Sikh and Hindu families who celebrate Diwali, (a festival of light marking the start of the New Year), or to Muslims for whom Ramadan followed by Eid marks the high point of the year in a religious, calendrical and social sense.

However, Christmas in Britain, since Victorian times, is a celebration which has come to incorporate a number of key contradictions. Its historical *raison d'être* is as a religious feast celebrating the birth of Christ and characterised by religious rituals and symbolism, (midnight mass, carol singing) and a celebration of christian values (love, charity, mercy, the sanctity of the family). Thus in origin it is a sacred festival but one which has more recently been projected into capitalist, materialist culture rendering it as much a secular as a sacred feast. It is partly the fluidity of the boundaries between the sacred and the secular that opens Christmas up to wider participation and 'consumption' by families in Southall.

Moreover, it is both a public and a private feast. In the public sphere it is celebrated, in some form, ubiquitously and recognised as a national holiday. But Christmas day itself is, for most, a highly private, domestic family affair. Television brings together the public and private dimensions of Christmas in a spectacular way enabling its public manifestations to be experienced in the privacy of one's home.

For families in Southall, perceptions of Christmas are derived from a variety of sources but perhaps most significantly from television; its the symbols, rituals, customs and traditions are represented.

Thus, television, in giving access to the private and public, the sacred and secular dimensions of Christmas facilitates participation in its ceremonies. Families in Southall incorporate different aspects of its

rituals and customs to varying degrees and in diverse ways but more often than not in a creative rather than in a mechanical way.

A corollary of this is that television viewing is itself the principal activity which most families engage in for exceptionally extended periods of time. Christmas has become very much 'Telexmas' as the various companies battle for viewers attention with the 'best' movies, feature length sitcoms, dramatic cliffhanging episodes of the home grown soaps and the inevitable national, public, almost sacred ritual 'The Queen's Speech'.

By focussing our attention on family viewing at Christmas we can gain insight into the complicated negotiations that take place around the tv set at a time when families are together for unusually long and often intense periods. The negotiations which have to be made about what, when, how and with whom to watch often bring to the surface underlying conflicts usually contained by the routine occupations of everyday life. These conflicts not only concern the internal dynamics of family relationships but broader questions of taste and preference and one's relationship to the surrounding culture.

Yasmin Alibhai (1987) sees Christmas as posing particular problems for parents in Southall where the impetus to celebrate, to buy trees, lights and wrap and exchange presents comes primarily from children. She, like the other 'spokespersons' whose opinions she invokes as evidence in support of her own, sees participation in Christmas by Southall kids and their families as a manifestation of oppressive, post-colonial, white power:- a form of cultural racism

"There is a big difference between children sharing in the joys of different festivals of the world and being absorbed into the dominant religion of the country for six weeks of the year.....Behind the goodwill lies the central power relation where Christian social rituals dominate"

She goes on to quote Arvind Sharma

"Everything about Christmas has to do with whiteness, the snow the imagery.....with messages of love in which you are not included because you are brown".

He goes on to ask

"If I withhold this seductive festival from my son what can I offer to replace it? Most Asians feel the contradiction between longing and rejection..it's a party to which you have never been invited...so you either say I never wanted to go or you make your own parties which are the real thing...These imitation parties are..like wearing someone else's clothes"

Thus for some 'Asians' participation in Christmas is seen as yet another way in which the dominant culture can exercise its power over the minority:- a festival for the majority 'other' which simultaneously entices but excludes the minority.

I have found little resistance on the part of parents to some form of participation in Christmas. On the contrary, families involve themselves in varying degrees and modes of participation. Nevertheless, Christmas can be a time when not only one's relationship to the surrounding culture has to be negotiated, but also to one's parents. Television in this situation becomes a mediator; it both facilitates negotiations and acts as a source of conflict; the conflict then is not dyadic i.e. simply between parents and children or between siblings but triadic and the tv functions in different ways depending on the situation.

It may be partial to one of the disputants (Hindi films as an affirmation of parental cultural values and Top of the Pops of peer group culture

It may be passive in the sense that merely by being there it affects the family's interaction

It may serve to clarify issues, suggesting appropriate norms and their applications

The extracts which follow show clearly how the advent of Christmas is signalled by the television and how preparations start very early in December initiated by children and sparked off by the references to it on tv. It demonstrates how participation in various customs, practices and ceremonies such as card giving, parties/discos and reciprocal present giving, decorations and lights are embraced with enthusiasm. Tv not only appears to initiate preparations but the excitement of planning culminate in the rather ambiguous pleasure of 'just watching tv' for many.

Baumann (1992) demonstrates how the replication and limitation of Christmas rituals among Punjabi and Hindu families in Southall draws attention to the way in which youth and adults negotiate their subtly differing relationships to surrounding 'others'. To the children these 'others' are their peers and school friends with whom they discuss and compare their own family's celebrations. He refers to Alibhai (1987) who mentions cases where children exaggerate the extent of their family Christmas celebrations in order to protect their parents from being thought 'backward', traditionalist or mean. To parents the 'others', likewise are fellow Punjabis, kin or neighbours, who again assess the merits of going too far, or not far enough, in replicating an originally alien ritual. There are further 'others', the category of the 'English' or 'gori' whom both adults and children know as the minority locally and as the majority nationally. Baumann (1992) argues that the Christmas ritual among London Punjabis can thus be seen as concerned with essentially with 'Others', their customs and values.

HARJINDER'S CHRISTMAS 1988

"Xmas day was great! all my relatives came round our house we watched 'Back to the Future' and 'The Empire Strikes Back'. I ate so many chocolates. We didn't cook turkey cos all my family are vegetarians. Instead we ate food like pakora and samosa"

KAMLESH'S CHRISTMAS 1988

Thursday, 8 Decemeber: while I was watching tv, the people kept saying: 'Here are films for Christmas and programmes for your enjoyment

Saturday, 10 Decemeber: My sister and I started to gather our money together to buy Christmas presents....

Sunday, 11 December: [...] My sister and i talked about how much money we had spent on Christmas presents. then we talked about having a Christmas dinner. We said we would have the following: turkey, Yorkshire pudding, mince pies, gravy apple sauce, sprouts, ice cream and jelly, nuts and a few other things. The turkey had to be stuffed.

Monday, 12 December: We got out our decorations and started to put them up...they were colourful and easy to put up. They made the room look packed.

Tuesday, 13 December: The family were discussing to buy a Christmas tree [...]

Wednesday, 14 December: We went and bought a Christmas tree [...]

Thursday, 15 December: When the tree opened up its brances we decorated it ...with colourful round balls and tinsel Everybody kept saying now we can put the presents under it.

Friday, 16 December: I told my friends (at school) that I would give their presents on Monday

Saturday, 17 December: We did all our shopping and bought wrapping paper. You use that to wrap presents [...]

Monday, 19 December: Today I gave my friends their presents. They all said thanks and seemed pleased

Tuesday, 20 December: A day before our Christmas holidays we had a disco (at school). A few people were carrying mistletoe. When I got home we put up our Christmas lights around the front room. It all looked very nice.

Wednesday, 21 December: My last day at school! I gave out all my cards and said 'Have a nice Christmas' [...] I am very much looking forward to Christmas

Thursday, 22 December: We bought the Radio and TV Times' and started to mark what we were going to watch and record over the holidays. The TV kept showing things to do with Christmas and how to help the elderly people who spend Christmas alone. We decided not to have a turkey but just snacks.

Friday, 23 December: Today I did all my last minute shopping and all the food shopping and wrapped any other presents that had been bought.

Christmas Eve: Today I gave everybody their presents. The rest of the day I spent at (our) shop. When I came home I just watched TV

Christmas Day: I was up bright and early. We all opened our Christmas presents, had chocolates and pulled crackers. The rest of the day we just watched TV and ate.

Boxing Day: Today I sat in front of the TV [...]

Wednesday, 28 December: Today I thought of saving up for next Christmas. Not much good stuff on (TV) The TV keeps going on about New Year programmes.

KULJIT'S CHRISTMAS 1989

"Christmas is a christian festival though my family does not follow the exact christian way. We do have a party, not the turkey type, but one with food that we all like. We also give presents and cards and we invite family and friends over. we put a Christmas tree up and hang decorations on walls and ceiling.

At Christmas we don't watch anything religious, us kids watch English films while our parents watch plenty of Indian movies. They watch them alone because us kids hate them, they're so boring, they're all exactly the same and people do unbelievable things. There's too much fantasy. I'm surprised my parents aren't bored stiff.

My parents don't watch much television but we did watch some family films together like Indiana Jones and Crocodile Dundee. They also watched a programme called "Follow that Star" about an Indian actor named Amitabh Bachan who talked about his his life his family and his career. I found this very boring and went upstairs.

When we watch television we never watch in silence we always laugh and talk throughout it. The one thing that causes arguments in our family about television is that our parents try and compare us with our cousins. they say "your cousins don't watch 'Top of the Pops' and 'Neighbours'." They don't realise that everybody had different tastes"

(Kuljit, 17 years, Sikh in a written account of her Christmas 1989)

DALJIT'S CHRISTMAS 1989

Christmas is certainly a christian festival. This does not mean that because I'm Asian that I can't celebrate it. Our family try to bring happiness and we all try to be closer without having to bite eachothers heads off. . At Christmas we have to plan what we watch as its the time to enjoy the best of tv but we can't watch everything we want to. My parents tend to watch Hindi films during Christmas, we find this a bit boring but it's the only time we all get together and enjoy ourselves

(Daljit, 16 year old Sikh girl)

MOHINDERPAL'S CHRISTMAS 1989

"My mum, especially at Christmas likes to see religious films like 'Ben Hur', 'Jesus of Nazareth' and 'The Ten Commandments', so does my father but not as much as my mother because she is very religious and likes finding out about other cultures.

Me and my brothers like sleeping in late at Christmas but we'll make an exception if there's an action packed fantasy on. I don't know anybody in my family, including relatives who doesn't enjoy Christmas. WE all enjoy what we watch on tv or if we don't we just don't bother. We watch more tv at Christmas and even though we are mature adults we begin to act like children over the tv if we didn't get what we want but thanks to modern technology we end up using the video recorder when we find it's not worth fighting about.

Tv is important at Christmas. Not only does it beat away stress or boredom but it teaches us to learn and understand and care about other cultures and beliefs as we would like other people to know about our culture too. But most of all it brings the family together, especially the soaps, we're a family of 'soapaholics''

(Mohinderpal, 17 year old Sikh boy)

GITA'S CHRISTMAS 1990

Well in my household we do quite a lot of things for Christmas that's because we feel part of the community. I give out the traditional cards and presents while my parents do the same. This year in my house my parents put up the lights around a God they believe in to form the Christmas decoration. This year was very busy as we had my dad's sister and brother coming over to celebrate. My mother and me made a few favourites of our family food but nothing very special. On Christmas Day my parents, who are vegetarians only watched tv with the kids, ate, had

laughs and caught up on the gossip. My parents bought many musical cards and boxes of chocolate so if anybody came we could give it to them.

NADIA

as we are Muslims we do take Christmas as a religious festival because Jesus was one of our prophets but we do not celebrate it, we don't give cards or presents. It does bring changes into our family because on that day we are all at home together and we watch tv with cups of tea and coffee in our hands

FARZANA

We don't really celebrate Christmas but we do give cards to friends and neighbours we receive them as well [...] instead of having more visitors we have less [...] the change that Christmas brings to our family life is that it brings us all together because dad who never has days off has 3 days off for Christmas and on Boxing day we go out so for a whole day we have dad all to ourselves

SAIRA

Christmas is a religious occasion but as I am a muslim we do not celebrate it [...] I was invited to a Christmas party but I refused to go. We celebrate in a different way..we remember our God and pray and perhaps go to relatives and give them Indian sweets...the only change it really makes is that it makes us think of people without food and homes. Also when it is our Eid we give 20% of our earnings throughout the year to people who need it

RAVINDER

I think Christmas is a time of giving and sharing and thinking of others around you and putting all the bad things that happened over the past year behind you

PARAMJIT

It brings happiness and excitement, we all enjoy the day just eating watching tv and being lazy. One of the reasons that there is excitement is that on Christmas eve it is Guru Gobind Singh's birthday

and that makes christams a bit specialwe go to the temple to pay respect and thank god for everything.[...] my mum does make a special dinner it's usually chicken meat balls in yoghurt, cauliflower and potatoes [...] I always receive a present because I'm the youngest [...] my mum's friend's came round with presents, mostly chocolate, because it was unexpected my mum tries to give them money but they wouldn't accept it

RANJIT

IT's the only time in the year when we're together for the longest period of time in ways this is good and in other ways it's bad because there are so many good films on at the same time nearly every christmas my sister and i argue over what to watch and we normally don't speak to eachother for the rest of the day because of this and this spoils it

we have the traditional turkey, roast potatoes, wine and christmas pudding Before having our dinner or during we always listen to the Queen's speech then afterward we sit down and watch tv.

in our family we respect all Gods and because christmas is celebrated by nearly everybody it gives us an excue to clebrate as well

Christmas is about togetherness, being with people you love, sorting out differences, caring and being loving, being happy, being sad. Christmas is basically about being with your family. But it also a time when the world can unite and help the unfortunate. The public, i feel are now becoming aware that something should be done to help the needy. The children in Romania who have never had a proper Christmas in their lives ae now for the very first time experiencing what it feels like to be happy [...] this would not have been possible if it weren't for the people who went to help them. this is nice because it shows that there sre still some people left in the world who do care"

CHRISTMAS DAY 1990

DALVINDER

ALL i did was watch tv [8 hours..] The next film was ET...I cried for the first time the second time and now again for the third time i

watched it with my younger brothers and sisters [...] Then i watched the gorgeous and hilarious Eddie Murphy in beverley Hills Cop 2 it was excellent even though i liked the first one better. The swearing shouldn't have been cut out as it took the humour out of it But the best film of the day was Baby Boom starring Diane Keaton as a career woman who gets dumped with a baby. i thought it was such a realistic film the way they projected the two lives of many woman the mother and the career woman- absolutely brilliant in my opinion

AMRIT

The days viewing began with watership Down it was just me and my brother and my sister. they found it very boring and slow I did too at times but the storyline and animation was good. then we watched and recorded 'The Ron Lucas Special', all my family watched this. I wanted to watch Top of the Pops so me and my brother went upstairs. There weren't many argument as we were recording it on ITV so someone had to sit there and pause it while the ads came on.

next we watched ET. My aunt and uncle had come. the adults found it boring at the begining but we had to tell them they should watch it as then they'd be able to understand the storyline. They discussed whether there really is life on other planets. My mum thinks there is but nobody else did.

We recorde beverley Hills Cop and I watched that with my brother and my dad. During the breaks we discussed why were drugs so common these days and we were told to be careful etc by our dad.

we watched a bit of Baby Boom but it was switched off when a scene came on with the babysitter bonking behind the sofa as the owner of the house got home from work. My dad put on an Indian film (Beta Beta) the same moralistic values came up again but this time the issues included respect for elders and love between brothers and sisters and how they should treat each other and not argue all the time like me and my brother. we didn't talk much after that

GURMAIL

it was christmas day i woke up late again. I watched all the programmes

on BBC1 from 10.30 am until 5pm then we watched my brother's wedding video (that is me mum dad and sister in law) . At 7.30pm we watched Bread and Birds of a feather and then we watched an Indian film.

RANJIT

[...] my two big sisters and mum are sitting in the main living room and we are watching 'Find a Family: Update'. My mum is getting all emotional and crying. I look at my eldest sister and now she starts. My middle sister and I are sitting quietly and watching it , she hasn't started yet but i think she is about to

My mum is worrying about the wind (it blew the pilot out on our central heating and we're sitting here in the freezing cold). there has just been a weatyher report on the tv about the winds getting worse.

My sisters and I are watching 'Noel's Christmas present and this sad bit comes on and my eldest sister is sitting crying her eyes out "again". Now my middle sister has started they're both sitting there crying.

My sister and I are sitting watching Lisa Stanfield in concert. we all agree that she isn't very good in concert so we won't bother going to see her. Now we're watching Top of the Pops. I'm singing along with the songs while she is quietly watching. I think I'm getting in her nerves. Anyway they're showing all these old songs which my eldest sister remembers but I don't and now she's really getting into it.

There's an old song from 1973, the year I was born, and the people singing have really long hair, platform shoes and falirs. My sisters are making fun of me. I'm waiting to get my own back on them. They're playing the song from Nre Order(world cup 90) and my sisters and I are singing along to it

They're playing all these vintage videos and we're all remembering what we were doing in those days. They've just finished showing Himan League in 1981 and my sister is remembering that she was college in that year.

They're playing Vanilla Ice and I'm singing along to it both my sisters are looking at me and wondering..my big sister says "If only you would learn your school work as quicky as you learn those songs."

Now they're showing Cliff Richards and Shakin Steven and my mum is a big fan of both. she is glued to the tv set and my big sister and I are making fun of the way Cliff richards is dancing. My mum is sticking up for Cliff Richards and saying that he's better than Madonna and Bros.

They're playing the song by the Righteous Brothers that came in the film Ghost and my sister and I are saying what a wicked film it is.

Eastenders is coming on in a minute. Everybody is glued to the set because they want to see what's going to happen Simon and the baby. Everybody in the family, especially my mum, thinks Ian is stupid. There isn't much talking going on.

Now we're listening to the Queen's speech.

we've just finished our dinner and for the first time my mum didn't make me eat the brusse l sprouts. I think she realises that I'm growing up.

we all settle down to watch ET, it is a little slow to start. we arent talking much just laughing at the funny bits. my sisters asleep on the sofa after her dinner. Toward the end when everybody thought ET was dead my sister and mum began to cry. I was telling them that he wasn't dead but they didn't take any notice. when he woke up they both stopped cryingwe all enjoyed watching ET my mum especially.

Then i watched Beverley Hills Cop on my own cos no-one else wanted to watch it. Finally we all watched baby Boom and enjoyed it. Christmas day wasn't brilliant I've had better it just didnt seem like christmas to me!

NADIA

On christmas day I enjoyed myself because I did no housework, I was just watching tv and films but it was a bit boring because we didn't

celebrate it the way other people do. I watched Moonraker and Rambo 1 with my sister and we enjoyed that.

AMAR

Today I did no homework at all instead I watched tv with my family. My auntie and uncle came round in the afternoon. Since my aunt's birthday is on Christmas day we had a surprise birthday cake for her. After cutting the cake and taking pictures we sat down to watch ET. As my dad was cooking he kept coming in and out of the kitchen to watch ET. When the film finished we ate. After eating we sat down to watch Beverley Hills cop and we were having a terrific time.

Watching ET and Beverley Hills Cop actually brought the family together and really made our Christmas day. When BHC finished my aunt and uncle left cos their little children were giving their mum a hard time. Then I watched Baby Boom with my sister and mum.

THE MAHABHARATA: FROM SANSKRIT TO SACRED SOAP

A CASE STUDY EXPLORING THE RECEPTION OF TWO CONTEMPORARY

TELEVISUAL PRODUCTIONS OF THE MAHABHARATA

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(1) INTRODUCTION

The Mahabharata is one of the foundation myths of Indian society. It is said to permeate every aspect of Indian social and to enshrine the philosophical basis of Indian culture and tradition.(1) This paper is based on a case study which examines the use, perception and interpretation of this epic myth in two distinct televisual forms in a Hindu family in Southall, a predominantly 'Asian' town in West London.

This is part of a broader enquiry into the way in which television is used among young British 'Asians' in Southall to negotiate the relations between parental and peer group cultures. In much of the race relations literature the distinction between parental and peer group cultures is seen as synonymous with a dichotomy between Indian and British culture. It is argued that young 'Asians', born and brought up in Britain are trapped in a 'clash of cultures'. (2) I want to problematise and undermine these dichotomies and use ethnography to examine the complexities and creative potential of these relationships.

The ethnography concerns one family's viewing of two television versions of the Mahabharata; the first Channel 4's six hour broadcast of Peter Brooke's theatrical production and the second, the 91 part dramatised serial broadcast on India's state channel, Doordarshan. The juxtaposition of the English and Indian versions provides a key to unlock the cultural specificity of the interpretative frames and filters which the young people in this family draw upon to make sense of this epic.

The paper has two central themes. First, I am interested in television's role in structuring a sense of space and place and the consequences of delivering Indian films and television beyond India's geographical boundaries and within the local and cultural specificities of Southall.

Secondly, I am concerned with three sets of questions regarding temporal relationships: first, how viewing the Mahabharata is

incorporated into the temporal flow of everyday life in this Hindu family (domestic time); secondly, how differences in the temporal dimensions of the two versions of the Mahabharata as a television text affect their reception and decoding (narrative time) as well as how the texts themselves construct and represent notions of time (diegetic and mythical time) and finally, how the Mahabharata is used to mediate relationships between parents and children and by extension negotiate issues relating to the differences in the parent's and children's experiences of contemporaneity (generational time)

The propositions which are woven through this paper can be summarised as follows:

First, the young Hindu children in this family come to the Mahabharata with two distinctive reservoirs of cultural knowledge and experience; one based on Indian culture, (acquired through socialisation in the home and local neighbourhood) and the second based on socialisation in British institutions, particularly in school and among their peers. In both these contexts television plays a significant role in facilitating the processes of enculturation into both British and Indian culture and society. However, contrary to common sense belief and to much of the relevant literature, these reservoirs of knowledge and experience, (like the ideological categories, British and Indian culture upon which they are based) are neither mutually exclusive nor necessarily oppositional but interact with, support and condition each other. They are the material and symbolic systems through which young people in Southall actively and creatively fabricate, live and transform their social lives.

Secondly, in responding to the Mahabharata two separate world views emerge in the discourses of the young people in this Hindu family; one which I shall describe as essentially pragmatic in that it emphasises the practicable rather than the ideal course of human social action and the other which is mythical and informed by the cultural specificities of Hindu moral and social philosophy and which may transcend as well as contradict, the pragmatic world view. It is through their viewing experiences of the Mahabharata that the young

people in the family studies are able to articulate these distinctive but related world world views.

Thirdly, I would argue that the viewing of sacred texts such as the Mahabharata does not, of and by itself, produce these world views, (such an argument would be too determinist and reductive). Rather, tv acts as a pivotal mechanism in providing at least the potential for deeper access to the foundation myths of their parent's culture. Viewing contributes directly to their mythical world view which is, in turn, determining of activity in the pragmatic world. In other words, tv plays an important and constructive role in assisting the young people in this family to refine, elaborate and act upon the systems of knowelge at their disposal.

Fourthly, transformations in tv delivery systems, especially in making available sacred texts or 'Gods' films, are also contributing to fundamental changes in the practices of Hinduism itself and to facilitating the increasingly central role of domestic as opposed to public worship. Television as a domestic medium is uniquely well suited to the purposes of domestic worship and thus plays a crucial role in re-aligning and re-articulating the boundaries betwen public and private and between male and female roles in these domains.

Finally, tv plays a significant role in re-creating and re-presenting Indian cultural norms and tradition among first and second generation British 'Hindus' in Southall but to what ideological effect, you may ask. This is a more elusive matter. Already in India the hugely popular tv serialisations of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana (its sister epic) are criticised for playing into the hands of a growing Hindu fundamentalism. And yet how different are their ideological connotations in the context of Southall, a 'Sikh' town where, in certain quarters, Sikh fundamentalism thrives but where Hindus themselves are a minority and where Hindi audio-visual media dominate. The complexities of this situation awaits further attention. But for the moment suffice it to say that the system of beliefs and values that the Mahabharata and Ramayana propagate are to be found re-

inscribed and re-instated in every contemporary popular Hindi film. So pervasive is their influence that, it is argued, both the Ramayana and the Mahabharata combined, function as a pan-Indian meta-discourse, an understanding of which is essential to any exploration of contemporary Hindi media. (3)

The outline of the paper is as follows:

In Part One I shall first set the ethnographic fieldwork in its context by briefly describing the Dhani family and secondly offer a brief description of the key distinguishing features of the two tv productions of the Mahabharata

Part Two of the paper presents a parallel textual and ethnographic account of viewing the Mahabharata with the Dhani family. It consists of my representation and analysis of their comments and behaviour while viewing. The first section focuses on their responses to and perceptions of the casting and characterisation in both versions and the second section centres on their comments on aspects of narrative time, structure and voice. These areas were chosen because they offer good insight into the frames of reference drawn upon to make sense of the productions and highlight the cultural specificity of the cultural and symbolic codes mobilised in the process.

Part Three of the paper examines some of the deeper philosophical aspects of the young Dhani's engagement with the Mahabharata. In particular it offers an account of their perceptions and interpretations of three related central themes in this epic, namely, Time, causality and moral contradiction

PART ONE

(1) The Dhani Family

The household consists of nine people; mother and father in their late forties, five females aged 23, 21, 19, 14 and 12 and two males aged 17

and 11 years. The parents originate from Bangladesh and came to England 12 years ago, shortly after the war. The father and mother are both employed in catering and their two eldest daughters are clerical assistants in another local catering firm. They live in a three bedroom terraced house in old Southall which is comfortably furnished. The main living room is a through lounge with tv set in the window bay and a side board with family photos and larger pictures of the gods draped with tinsel.

Upstairs the family have their own domestic shrine and here 'puja' or prayers are performed three times a day. Visits to the temple are infrequent and reserved for special occasions and religious festivals. Worship and leisure take place principally in their home. Unusually, they have no other relatives living nearby. Their main leisure activity is watching television and at the weekend they watch two or three popular Hindi movies as well as several 'god' films. The girls and youngest boy are keen viewers of Neighbours, Home and Away and Game Shows which are their main weekly viewing. The eldest son hires English and American videos which the family view two or three times a week especially when the father is working late and the mother is busy.

The family watches more Hindi than English tv and films since all the family can understand these (admittedly to varying degrees). They have a video library of about 100 films in Hindi, including a wide range of religious films which they (re-)view regularly. The children speak in English together and in Bengali to their parents. The father understands and speaks a little English but the mother neither understands nor speaks English.

(2) Family viewing of religious videos

The mother is the most keen viewer of religious videos and will stay up, accompanied by the younger children, until the early hours of the morning, viewing them. There is a tone of guilty pleasure in her voice when she admits to having hired 5 videos at the weekend and watched them all (15 hours viewing) at least once! Such admissions are usually

accompanied but playful reprimands by husband or children who complain that she cannot get up before midday following a session of religious movies, plus they are quite expensive to hire in such quantities.

For her, religious films provide comfort and solace from life's everyday anxieties. When she or a member of her family is ill or when she is worried she will view them compulsively. But they also function as part of her and her family's religious practice itself. Certain rules and rituals accompany viewing; incense is lit at the start of the film and a salutation to God is made. Often a puja will be performed before or during viewing. Once a 'God' film is put on, it must be viewed until the end. No food is allowed to be eaten whilst viewing except 'prasad', or holy food and the preferred seating position is upright with toes pointing toward the screen as in act of worship at the temple.

In fact, the viewing of 'God films' is regarded by the mother especially as an act of pleasurable devotion in itself. The appearance on screen of favourite gods such as Krishna, in close-up, gazing direct to camera, with eyes seemingly penetrating the viewer's inner core, is for them like a divine apparition in itself, the reality status of which remains, unquestioned. Such viewing is considered to 'bring the Gods into you' and if, after watching, 'you can bring the gods into your dreams', then it is considered to be a divine visitation whereby blessings are bestowed and favours may be requested.

This highlights the importance, in any analysis of television, of taking into consideration the context of viewing. The meaning of viewing is not pre-given, but has to be created in the domestic context. Viewing the Mahabharata and Ramayana is not just important because of their value in Indian culture but because they are perceived as sacred. These television programmes are not seen as representations of the texts, they are the Mahabharata and Ramayana. They are synonymous with the ancient sacred texts. It is the mother who, in the first instance, gives them or proposes their power. She

has appropriated video technology in such a way as to strengthen and confirm her domestic and cultural power.

Prior to the advent of new delivery systems anything more than the most rudimentary knowledge of the Mahabharata in Southall would have been unusual, unlike the Ramayana which is much more accessible and well known. Similarly in India deeper access to it could only be gained through a reading of the Sanskrit text but that would exclude the majority of women of the Dhani mother's generation who are illiterate. Her understanding of the Mahabharata is derived mainly through her father's story telling, religious instruction in the temple and through its various popularisations in theatrical and print forms in India. Despite the enormous popularity of the cartoon strips of the Mahabharata, it is now principally through television that she is able to communicate its stories. She exploits the entertainment and the instructional aspects of the texts and the medium to inform her children and negotiate with them the values inherent in the myths.

It is however interesting to note that competing claims of greater knowledge and understanding of their religion via tv and their mother are made by her children; the youngest boy, Ranjit(11 years), whispered to me

"well, I know most really about the gods because I sleep with my mother and she always tells me stories before I go to sleep and when she's watching late at night she'll, keep waking me up and saying 'watch this Ranjit, it's important' so often I go upstairs and splash my face with cold water and sit up until 3 or 4 in the morning with her".

Malati (14 years old) claims a better understanding of the films and as a consequence of Hinduism, because she does Hindi at school and so has better access to the language (her ambition is to read the whole Mahabharata in Sanskrit like her grandfather), whilst Sefali (19 years)

claims grgreater knowledge because she is older and is doing English A level and can understand stories better generally'.

In fact, few Hindus, young or old are very familiar with the Mahabharata in its entirety due to its length and complexity although they are deeply familiar with parts of it, particularly the Gita, a sacred text, recited by Krishna to Arjuna, before the great battle in the epic took place. There is also a superstition, common in India that having the Mahabharata Holy Book in one's home or reading it may bring bad luck and conflict into the family. Some say this is because the story concerns war and conflict but I suspect that it had more to do with its provocative and complex moral philosophy, a point which we shall examine in much greater detail in Part Three of this paper. This same superstition, however, does not appear to extend to the televised version, partly because it is made so much more accessible due to its popular, serialised 'soap' format. In Southall, each episode is avidly followed in many Hindu homes, especially by women but I know of Sikhs and Muslims who also watch it regularly. It appears to be less popular generally among many young 'Asians' who don't understand Hindi and therefore find reading the subtitles tedious and the narrative pace too slow.

(3) The Fieldwork

The ethnographic data, upon which this account is based, has been gathered over a seven month period in various stages. On my first visit to the Dhani's home, (November, 1989) I joined them to watch Brooke's version in English, which they had heard about from friends at the temple and were looking forward to watching. I knew one of the girls, Malati, as her former teacher and one day, at school, asked her if I might join her family to view it since I was very interested but knew nothing about it. After some questioning about my motives they agreed.

"why are you interested in Mahabharata?" asked Ranjit upon arriving
"because I've heard it is a story which has a lot of wisdom in it, if you can understand it" i replied

"If you can understand the Mahabharata, you can understand life itself", he retorted with the air of an elderly sage.

It was thus in the hope of understanding some of its wisdom that we set out to watch Brooke's version together. However, the experience was so bewildering and disconcerting (for reasons which will be explained later) that we abandoned it altogether after three hours and 'Sita's Wedding' (a 'God film' centred on an episode from the Ramayana) was put on in its place.

Thereafter, I visited regularly on Saturday evenings to view the televised serial of the Ramayana on video and other films based on it. Two months later, Sefali (19) and Malati(14) invited me over to re-view Brooke's production. Having read some strip cartoons of it, they felt more confident in approaching it and were very keen to understand it themselves and try to explain it to me. A number of visits were made during school holidays and at weekends to view it on video. This gave the added advantage of them being able to pause it when they wanted to discuss something or explain things to me.

We have, to date viewed the first two parts of Brooke's Mahabharata; The Game of Dice and Exile in the Forest but not the third and final part, The War. In April, the BBC2 began broadcasting the Indian televised version. Since then I have become a regular visitor and we watch it together most weekends. Thus the following account, though research in progress, is based on extensive viewing in their home, (visits last from between 8 and 14 hours usually), where by now, my presence is well accepted, and thankfully at times ignored. Not only has the data been gathered in many stages but our viewing of the two versions have overlapped. This is further complicated by the fact that videos of the Indian tv serial are widely available locally and the family's curiosity and impatience to see the later episodes has meant that they are well ahead of the broadcast version.

(4) Same Story, Different Forms

(i) The Storyline

The central story of the Mahabharata is the family feud between two groups of rival cousins, the Pandavas and the Kauravas, which results in a world shattering war, leaving millions dead. Although the story concerns kings and queens, gods and goddesses, the main characters are people with human weaknesses and frailties.

The drama functions on two planes; first, the will of the Gods who can change into whatever form they wish to take and secondly, the will of humans on earth to fulfill their destiny. Among the humans, the key tension arises between sons and nephews (cousin rivalry) and between fathers and uncles (male sibling rivalry). To redeem humans one needs women. They act as mothers, step-mothers, adoptive mothers, rearing aunties, mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law. It is their sacrifice which guides men toward their duty. The duty of men is duty towards the Gods. Thus men fulfill the will of the Gods; men owe their pride to the Gods and their existence to female humans. (4) See Appendix Two for a more detailed outline of the story

In order for the reader to appreciate the differences between Brooke's production and Doordarshan's serial I shall now highlight some of the key distinguishing characteristics of both.

(ii) The Film of the Play and the Sacred Soap

Brooke's tv production is based on his theatrical version of the Mahabharata. An international co-production, spearheaded by Channel 4, it was shot on 35mm film at the Joinville studios, Paris. The visual style of the film and its modes of realism were thus crucially determined by the studio setting. The sets, which are sparse, bare and earth coloured match the costumes which are equally simple and even sombre. There are no realistic exteriors, no battalions of warriors; yet close ups and photographic precision convey a certain realism. Costumes, lamps, weapons and furnishings were brought from India so in order to ensure, what Kustow calls, 'close-up' realism:

'The result is thus the cinematic equivalent of the stage version'.

The cast of Brooke's production is international and drawn from each of the five continents, no doubt to emphasise the universal nature of the story, 'the mirror in which every human being can see him or herself'. Whilst they draw upon their own cultural characteristics they are intended to have an international appeal.

To summarise, Brooke's production is theatrical, authored and targetted at a middle-class, educated audience. Although screened in six consecutive hours on a saturday evening, it defies any simple generic classification. If it falls into any generic category, the 'single play' tradition of British television, would be most appropriate. It is divided into three main parts; The Game of Dice; Exile in the Forest and The War. Despite its Channel 4 timbre -i.e their remit for making culturally diverse programmes and its international cast, it is overwhelmingly based on western aesthetics of performance and production.

In sharp contrast Doordarshan's production is not specifically authored. It is filmic and aimed at a mass, national audience (115 million people watch it weekly in India), a large percentage of whom are illiterate and uneducated. However, its audience, crosses class, caste, regional and even religious boundaries and it bridges 'high' and 'low' cultural forms. As a genre it most resembles the continuing serial or soap in its length, (approximately 70 hours), its preoccupation with family conflicts and kinship ties and in the intimacy and familiarity with the characters which develops alongside the unfolding narrative. However, it is formulated entirely in accordance with the Hindi film aesthetic.

The sets are majestic and palatial, inhabited by kings and queens, gods and goddesses. We are transported from the heavens to earth, from magnificent palaces to epic battlefields . The costumes and jewelry are opulent, regal and highly colourful. Special effects are employed to convey the actions or miracles of the gods; at one moment thousands of arrows are seen darting across the heavens, goddesses magically appear from the sea, the next moment we are invited to share

in the splendour of the gods in paradise. Dramatic moments in the story are powerfully reinforced by special effects; the earth is made to tremble and shake or lightening and thunder express the solemnity of a promise or the anger of the gods. In accordance with Hindi aesthetics, the narrative moves through successive modes of spectacle, action, emotion, song, intense dialogue in circular rather than linear fashion.

The striking differences between these two productions allows us some access to the frames of reference and reservoirs of knowledge and experience which the Dhani children draw upon in order to make sense of them. In examining the processes of reception and decoding two key areas have been chosen because of their salience to the Dhani's; first casting and characterisation and secondly, aspects of the narrative and narration.

PART TWO: RECEPTION AND DECODING

(1) casting and characterisation

It is difficult to convey the bewildering confusion which accompanied our first viewing of Brooke's Mahabharata. To set the scene, ten people were present, the family and myself. Unused to viewing in such a large group, I was surprised by the amount of talk and comment and thus found it difficult to hear and follow the narrative. From the outset the children were shouting 'who's that?', simultaneously trying to identify and explain who was who! The international casting and the representation of the characters had the immediate effect of rendering their dearly loved gods and goddesses unrecognizable and this confusion was voiced in an unceasing barrage of argument

'look! that's Ganesha!'

'no it isn't, be quiet!'

'there's Vishnu!'

'don't be silly, its Vyasa'

'But Vyasa is Vishnu'

'no he isn't he's Krishna'

The children appealed to their mother for help, but she was even more lost than they because she understands very little English and the father had 'turned off' and gone out with the elder son after one half hour muttering 'it doesn't carry the meaning, it's no good'.

The international casting was greeted variously - the younger children found the black character playing Bhishma amusing whilst a certain unvoiced disapproval on the part of the mother could be detected. Sefali, the 19 year old daughter thought it emphasised the universal nature of the story's appeal

'it's interesting that they've chosen actors from so many different races, it sort of brings all the world together, it makes you feel as if all the human race is one, i suppose they want to show that the mahabharata relates to the whole human race'

On a subsequent viewing she further commented that the choice of black actors was appropriate

"they've chosen the right kind of character to play the role of Karna because he is strong and has a certain meanness about him..all the strong characters are black like Bhishma and Kunti, although Bhishma should look more physically strong...black seems to symbolise strength in the English one"

But the whole dilemma on the first viewing revolved around identifying the characters. Being familiar with only some of the characters, they felt that if they succeeded in naming the character they would then be more likely to be able to situate them within the narrative. Viewing became a frantic guessing game, but they had few visual clues to help them and whilst the dialogues were simple and clear, they demanded a degree of concentration difficult to achieve amidst the noise.

After confusion, irritation set in. Sefali, feeling exasperated, cried

"you can't even recognise Krishna here, normally he's blue"

"Gunga and Bhisma normally wear white, it's a symbol of purity and truth"

Certain conventional visual codes had been flouted such as colours, usually symbolic of certain qualities or associated with particular characters. But this was simply the tip of the iceberg. More disarming than the disruption caused by the visual codes was the transgression of deeply rooted cultural codes. But this only became apparent upon viewing the Indian version for it was not until then that they were able to articulate the difference between these quite distinct styles of representation.

"All the gods are born into royal families. In the Indian one you can tell the gods from humans but not in the English one. In the Indian one you can tell he's a king from his dress, behaviour, strength, they actually show their strength and also when Krishna appears there's always joyful music..there are other details like the king will always wear gold and the prince silver"
(sefali)

"like in the Indian one you can tell a baddy because he will be wearing black clothes and the music will have an evil feel to it, but in the English one you can't tell who's who, they've left it all to language whereas in the Indian one everything contributes to the meaning, language, dress, jewelry, behaviour actions, everything has meaning"
(malati)

Thus, the flouting of both visual and cultural codes contributed to the negative response to Brooke's version. It should be noted that the Hindu deities are very affectionately regarded and pictures of them adorn most Hindu households. The visual codes associated with the

representation of Hindu deities have developed over the centuries and were initially stereotyped in the popular, mass produced prints. Tapati Guha-Thakurta has traced the changing iconography of popular picture production

"The introduction of lithography presses and colour printing in the domain of artisanal picture production led to the increasing turnover of gaudy chromolithographs of Hindu deities...with loud flamboyant colours, dazzling costumes and majestic backdrops as their main trademark. These pictures have a rather tenuous basis in realism except in the solidity and roundedness they imparted to all forms.....the humanisation and domestication of divinity, theatrical postures and expressions became part of the fixed stereotype of the gods".(7)

There is no time to digress further on this point but it is clear that such pictorial representations were most influential in fixing the stereotypical portrayal of gods and goddesses in filmic and televisual forms. The power and authority of such 'sacred' representations cannot be ignored. Small wonder that the apparent 'profanity' of Brooke's version should surprise and disorientate spectators.

The combination of the serial form and the more conventional portrayal of characters in the Indian version allows for greater involvement and intimacy

"you get to know the characters much better in the Indian one and the funny or special things about them, like Bhima, in the Indian one whenever he gets a chance he is eating, he's playful and silly but aggressive when he wants to be"
(malati)

"another thing is that you can identify with the characters better, because it's slower, you get to know the characters you like and dislike but not with the English one, they all seem far away, distant,

but in this one you feel you're in it, you're involved".
(Sefali)

For the Dhani family, the Brooke production

'borrowed the story but not the culture, the culture is missing'.

The lack of distinction between Gods and humans is distasteful to them because the Gods are not portrayed with due status, dignity and respect. In contrast, the Gods in the Indian version emanate a sacred aura and consequently, can be worshipped on the screen. The rituals associated with viewing 'God films' are respected and viewing becomes an act of devotion in itself. Unlike with the Brooke production, the children can mobilise their formidable reservoir of cultural knowledge in constructing the narrative. It is when questions of narrative are discussed that one gains deeper insight into the cultural frames of reference which they have at their disposal.

(2) Narrative

The focus in this section is on the differences in narrative form and in the dramatic weighting given to events. The role of the narrator in both productions is also discussed.

(i) Viewing time

The experience of viewing a six hour televised drama is hardly comparable with the weekly viewing of a 45 minute episode of a 92 part serial. And yet, important consequences result in contrasting these narrative forms.

The Indian version is seen by the children to resemble a soap opera allowing for greater detail, depth, familiarity and intimacy. Each episode repeats the final scene of the previous one which is usually left on a dramatic climax

"it's like Neighbours, you get hooked on it'.

This contrasts with the density of the English version which concentrates on and inflates the main narrative events, eliminating the many subplots. Moreover, the narrative

'has a beginning and an end but the Indian version has no beginning and no end'. (Malati)

In the Indian version, the narrative discourse time (viewing time) seems, to the viewer, to relate more closely to the diegetic time (story time), which spans centuries. It is better able to represent epic or 'mythical' notions of time. This affects the way events are represented and perceived.

(ii) Dramatic weighting

The events in the English version are represented as magical and metaphorical whereas in the Indian version they are understood morally and literally - the perceived realism of events being a function of the moral order. This has profound implications for the dramaturgical process; for the weighting given to events and character's actions, for the moments of tension, dramatic climax and resolution. In order to demonstrate this point more fully let us compare how both versions deal with the same sequence, which occurs at the beginning of the Mahabharata.

Santanu, the king is married to Gunga. They are Gods who were cursed by Brahma, (Gunga's father and The Creator) and sent to earth to suffer as humans. Upon marrying Santanu, Gunga made him promise that he would never question any of her actions. She gives birth to seven sons and each of them she drowns to save them from human suffering. The King cannot ask her why. On the birth of the eighth son he breaks his promise and refuses to let her drown the child. That child is Bhishma.

The children are able to interpret this seeming act of cruelty as being for the greater moral good. Gunga, sacrifices her children since she knows they are cursed to suffer as humans. She is seen as

possessing greater moral strength than her husband who, cursed to suffer as a human, acts with human frailty.

Years later, Gunga having disappeared and Bhisma a grown man, King Santanu falls in love with Satiavati and asks her fisherman father for her hand. Her father will only agree to their marriage if King Santanu forbids Bhisma's claim the throne thus allowing Satiavati's son to be King's successor. The price is too high for the king because he loves and respects his son and rightful heir, Bhisma. But in an act of supreme self sacrifice and devotion to his father, Bhisma makes a vow, renouncing the throne and promising to remain celibate forever and thereby preventing any contest over the throne in future generations. In reward for such moral strength, Santanu blesses him with the power to choose the time of his own death.

The dramatic weighting given to these events in the two versions is entirely different. In the Indian version the moral order is disturbed by Santanu breaking his promise never to question his wife, Gunga and this is given dramatic effect by the music, acting and expressions. Moral order is restored when Bhisma makes his vow. It is hard to convey the emotion and awe that this act inspired in the children. As Ranjit, the youngest boy exclaimed

"In the English version they make it seem like its just a little promise but in the Indian version, Bhisma's vow shakes the earth, thunder and lightening open up the skies, no human would be able to make a promise like that just to please his father, I love that bit, it's pure! if he does that for his father, imagine what he would do for his mother!"

(ranjit)

Furthermore, in order to underline the significance of this vow, the narrative flow is interrupted by shots of the heavens accompanied by the narrator's voice-over who underlines the significance of this act saying

'never has there been such a man'.

Thereafter, follows scenes of intense emotional power, intimate exchanges between father and son revealing the King's guilt for his son's suffering which later, causes him to die a broken hearted man. Although Bhishma's vow had the opposite effect to that intended and his father's death leaves a void and opens up the further problem of his succession, providing a hook for the next episode.

The movement of the narrative from disruption to resolution to further disruption is moral in nature (rather than hermeneutic) and this, combined with the intense emotional exchange between Bhishma and his father, which powerfully expresses the strength of kinship bonds and duty, has a profound affective and moral and social impact on the Dhani children. Scenes such as these, (and there are many) clearly provide role models and help to structure their notions of kinship duty. On many occasions they use this and other exemplars, drawn from their religious viewing, to guide them in their own kinship duties and live out the values of respect, loyalty, honour, obedience in their own family life.

By contrast, the English version emphasises narrative events which are not very significant to them. For example, Brooke's production gives enormous weighting to the divine births of the Pandavas and Kauravas. Indeed the births form the dramatic high point of the first part

"In the Indian one, Kunti never tells you where she gets her children from, it's taken for granted that they are from the gods, not like in the English one where they had to explain that to English people because they probably wouldn't understand that they are superhuman, so you have to adapt it to them" (Malati)

In the Indian version, certain cultural knowledge, (like, for them, the 'fact' that the Pandavas and Kauravas are incarnations of gods) is assumed and in constructing and responding to the narrative the children are able to draw upon this reservoir of knowledge whilst also

being able to position themselves as English spectators who need certain 'taken for granted' things explained. In other words the Brooke version does not 'speak' to them. Similarly, Sefali points out that the notion of dharma, (the law upon which the order of the world rests), a notion crucial to any understanding of the Mahabharata, is taken for granted in the Indian version but needs lengthy explanation in the English version.

But it would be a mistake to assume that this knowledge or cultural competence is somehow complete or equally shared and agreed upon among the Dhani children who constantly battle with each other over finer points of interpretation. Part of the task here is to understand the processes involved in the construction of the narrative and to understand not only what knowledge is used to understand the story but also to identify gaps in that knowledge. I have already referred to the 92 part televised Ramayana, which the family have previously viewed on video, in its entirety, once. This provides the greatest store of knowledge and information which the young Dhani's can draw upon in making sense of the Mahabharata. Yet it also confuses them particularly when it comes to understanding part-whole relationships. There is in the Mahabharata and Ramayana some overlap between characters and events. One of the major questions which puzzled the children in our early viewings of the Mahabharata was how the two texts are related

"what we don't understand is that there are parts of the Ramayana which come into the Mahabharata but the Mahabharata is supposed to be older".

(Ranjit)

They are familiar with mini-narratives in the whole but have no conception as yet of the whole, which is hardly surprising at this stage of their viewing, but causes them to be frustrated

"I know some of these stories, i just can't recognise them properly, they don't seem like they belong here".(sefali)

But there are moments where they confuse the two stories as with the archery contest in the Mahabharata (where Arjuna demonstrates his skill as an archer) which they initially confused with the bow scene in the Ramayana, (where Ram demonstrates his strength in lifting the bow and winning the hand of Sita). Furthermore the portrayal of Krishna in the Ramayana is entirely different to that in the Mahabharata, a point which will be elaborated upon later. Thus, this knowledge can both aid and obstruct their comprehension of the narrative. But in both versions the narrator plays an important communicative role.

The role of the narrator

The story of the Mahabharata is narrated by Vishnu through Vyasa and transcribed by Ganesha (the elephant god who is an incarnation of Vishnu).

In the English version, a young Indian boy accompanies Vyasa and Ganesha. It is this character with whom the children could most closely identify.

"i think the boy is an example of a human being and he's there to show us what we can gain from watching, the story is being told to the boy by Vyasa and he asks the questions that we would".

(malati)

In identifying with the young boy, they also claim to identify with the human race

"look, you see when the boy asks, 'and I have the same blood, I come from the gods?', that is how the story starts, that is how the human race came about and we are like the boy a part of the human race, it is telling us that we are all one"

(sefali)

Whereas in the English version we see Vyasa the narrator, the narration is given a divine quality in the Indian version. It is directly narrated by Vishnu who does not appear in person but is a

disembodied voice emanating from heaven. A much more complex notion surrounds the narration here.

"In the beginning of the Indian one you see the shadow of the world going round, that symbolises Time and destiny, which goes on and on, because time waits for no-one. It is the shadow that is telling the story, it is Vishnu, he is Time. When there's something important, like Bhishma's vow, he interrupts, because some people might not understand the importance of it"
(Sefali)

"Vyasa is Krishna and he is the only one who can tell the story, without him there would be no story because Krishna is Vishnu and Vishnu is Time, that's why Krishna's got the Chakkar around his wrist, that's how you always recognise Krishna, by the Chakkar" (the circle of Time)
(Malati)

The Chakkar is a bracelet, a distinguishing feature of Krishna, symbolising the circle of time or eternity. The gods are interchangeable and can different forms according to the stage of time or yuga they are born into. In the Mahabharata Krishna is born into a particular stage of time, the age of destruction, and is seen to act provocatively

"But Krishna throws away the chakkar at the battle, he is no longer in control of time, he leaves things to happen, he lets war happen, he shouldn't have done that" (ranjit)

Ranjit at this stage in viewing the Indian version cannot understand why Krishna would allow a war to happen. The complexity of Krishna playing an important role in the story as well narrating the story through Vyasa is confounding

"But i don't understand how Vyasa is Krishna because they talk to each other you see what Krishna says to Vyasa 'as you narrate me, what will happen?', it's like a double mystery game". (malati)

For the Dhani children viewing the Mahabharata has become a very active learning experience. Some of the confusions and contradictions which accompanied the early stages of viewing are clarified in later episodes of the Indian version and while reviewing the Brooke production, other themes remain more obscure and difficult to grasp. However, three recurring questions are; How could Krishna, a god let war happen? Did he cause it to happen? Is he acting in accordance with Time? So it is now to the deeper philosophical, moral and religious aspects of the Dhani children's cultural reservoirs that we now plunge.

PART THREE

TIME, CAUSALITY AND MORAL CONTRADICTION

In this section I shall demonstrate how the young Dhani's manage access to the deeper meanings in the Mahabharata and show how their use of television acts as a pivotal mechanism which helps to develop their knowledge and understanding of some very complex ideas which, although already planted, have not yet matured.

One of the most surprising and striking qualities of the Dhani children is their ability to talk in ways and about philosophical themes which I simply would never have imagined possible in children their age. My understanding of them is not solely based upon our viewing experiences together but on my participation in the family and social life, on visits and outings which are unmotivated by the immediate concerns and demands of the research. This is important as it has afforded some access to the cultural specificity of their lives and to their pragmatic and mythical world views.

I distinguished earlier between two separate world views which the Dhani have access to and use; one which is pragmatic and concerns practical conduct in everyday matters and the other which is mythical and culturally specific and founded upon the essential mysteries and paradoxes of Hinduism. Viewing the Mahabharata has undoubtedly deepened their understanding their mythical world view which in turn is determining of activity and thought in the pragmatic sphere. To illustrate this point, an anecdote;

One day I took the children to Richmond Park to see the deer. After two hours walking we had not seen one deer. This was most unusual and I was irritated by their absence. Malati then turned to me exclaiming

"If its written in our fate to see deer today we will"

My irritation turned to surprise when a few minutes later we arrived at the top of hill only to look down on a herd of grazing deer.

Such notions of fate and destiny are very much part of their everyday interpretative frameworks. However, the moral contradictions which the Mahabharata posed them were of a different nature and require a deeper understanding of notions of Time and Causality in Hinduism. What follows is based entirely on The children's responses whilst viewing. Having little knowledge myself of Hinduism, I have no idea, as yet, how accurately the ideas represent Hindu philosophy.

The first viewing of Brooke's Mahabharata, accompanied by confusion and a sense of alarm, was stopped at the point when Krishna persuades Arjuna to go to war and fight. Krishna is a god, an incarnation of Vishnu and yet he engineers deceit and provokes war. Malati commented

"you don't know who are the goodies and the baddies in this film"

It was so disconcerting for them that the elder daughter and mother went upstairs to pray, returned downstairs, lit incense and decided to watch, Sita's Wedding, a 'god film' of reassuring familiarity. It was

not until later that I realised that at this point of the Mahabharata it becomes very difficult for Malati and her family to continue believing in the divinity of Krishna. (8)

"This story is strange because it makes you see good in bad and bad in good"

(Malati)

Therefore it is not simply that good and bad are confused but they can coincide and this is not only bewildering but questions the 'goodness' even of the gods

"but why if the gods know what is going to happen don't they prevent bad things happening?"

(Ranjit)

However, it becomes clear that good and bad are subject to time, to the passage of time. Sefali explained that the age of the universe is divided into four yugas or stages; the first is when the gods are in heaven and all goes well on earth. With each yuga goodness in the world slowly disappears until in the fourth yuga destruction reigns.

"In the early stages of time, human beings lived close to the gods and things were in harmony, that's why Santanu, although he was only a demi-god was able to give Bhisma the power to decide the time of his death. But then Time moves on to a stage where humans move away from the gods and then chaos comes".

(Malati)

Not only therefore are good and evil subject to time but so are the gods. Ultimately, all is for the good but in the short term, in any of the phases where humans are separated from the gods, the categories good and evil, gods and humans may become ambiguous and even coalesce because they are governed by time. The age of destruction is the age of Kali.

"This is the age of Kali, Kali means destruction. Now she is Vishnu's wife Lakshmi, but when evil gets so much in the world that even the gods can't cope with it, Lakshmi changes into Kali, evil is so evil that it has to become good."

(Sefali)

Thus the age of Kali is one particular stage in that process where humans have moved so far away from the gods, where evil has reached its limit and even the gods transform themselves and become instruments of destruction

"you see Krishna is starting the war off, he says to Arjuna that he must take the kingdom even though it means killing his own family. But you can't say Krishna is being bad, he's doing the best for mankind."

(Sefali)

At first, the Dhani children found it very hard to conceive of Krishna as a war-maker. But later an understanding emerges which accepts that whilst the actions of the gods may seem immoral in the short term, it is nevertheless understood that in the long term they will be for the good.

"If the world doesn't have Yudhistira for king then the world will be bad anyway. Krishna's intentions are good but he persuades the Pandavas to go to war and even tells lies because he knows that you have to go through a bloody war all because of justice, he does it to fulfill dharma"

(Malati)

Dharma, or the law upon which rests the order of the world is also the personal and secret order each human being recognises as his or her own, the law he or she must obey. The decline and destruction of dharma is the sine qua non of the Mahabharata and the reason why Krishna descends on earth with his superior tricks to restore it. To save dharma, Krishna induces the Pandavas to conduct the war and when fair means prove inadequate, he uses guile, deceit and trickery. Thus

not only human beings but the gods and the world itself are subject to Time

"You see humans are ruled by Time and so is the world, Time, fate and destiny don't wait for anyone and not even the gods can prevent some things happening, the world has to fulfill its own destiny IN TIME like human beings"
(sefali)

Thus we see here that the Dhani children possess and can articulate a view of the world which challenges and negates some of the certainties of their pragmatic everyday world. And yet what I have described as two world views are not separate and mutually exclusive but interact. We see this when the radicalness of the ideas expressed about time, good and evil and the actions of the gods is taken back and reduced to a battle between goodies and baddies

"Krishna has taken sides with the Pandavas but how this comes about is that before the battle he see Duryodhana and says, 'what do you want my army or me?' and Duryodhana replies, 'your army' because he thinks that will help him win the battle. Then he goes to Arjuna and asks 'what do you want my army or me?' and he replies 'you'. The Pandavas brothers are considered "more holy" than the Kauravas, they make the right decision, that's why Krishna protects them.
(Malati)

This is a consolation. By giving a reason why Krishna protects the Pandavas - they are good, they, unlike the Kauravas are worthy of his protection - the everyday pragmatic world view rears its head again and the notion of good and bad are re-instated as categories

"Vishnu never says you've got to worship me, you must first open out, you must know in your heart what is right and wrong"
(Malati)

"The Mahabharata makes you see life like it's a war too, it's a battle between good and evil that everyone fights... a battle for, sort of, justice or dharma, and when the equilibrium is lost you have chaos, like in King Lear...Time moves in circles and there are times when the world moves away from god, don't you think it's a bit like that now?"
(Sefali p.33)

The possibility for human beings in any stage of history to escape chaos by moral action becomes a necessity for pragmatic, everyday living. Thus in the short term, through honesty, devotion and performing one's duty, moral action is possible, in the medium term, we simply do not know, but in the face of eternity, the distinction between good and evil disappears for

'what is, is'.
(Sefali)

Humans have ethical discernment and whilst the categories 'good' and 'bad' are again obvious, the consequences of moral actions can never be presumed

"... human beings have a free will, they can choose between different actions. Destiny or fate does not control everything, neither do the gods, people have some freedom to choose their path. But you can't do something good with the hope of getting a reward, you must first know what is right and then do it but if you do something good you can't be sure the outcome will be good"
(Sefali)

But Ranjit restates the principle, i.e the possibility of good and evil only to question it

"we're created by the gods, but in the war if the Kauravas had won it, all the world would have been bad but when Arjuna and Krishna won the battle, they gave good people to the world and even though there are always some bad people in the world but there are always good people

to show them they way, anyway (he chuckles) that's what the gods thought!" (Ranjit)

To summarise the propositions underlying the discourse of the Dhani children make:

Good = evil = good = evil in the face of eternity because only Time ultimately decides what is good and evil. This paradox applies even to the actions of the gods who are also subject to Time and enveloped in their own eternity. However, human moral action would be impossible if such a knowledge were taken as the only knowledge possible and in order to be virtuous, humans must develop a knowledge of what is right and wrong at any one time.

"if you think about it why do holy men meditate? it's to get their soul pure, so that the body becomes immaterial, you have to lose desire and when you get to this state Krishna takes your senses, he comes into you and you see through him, hear through him, everything you touch is through him, everything. It is then you become harmonious with god"

(sefali)

Devotion and meditation and being close to the gods makes possible actions that are morally good, if only in the short, human term. However, no knowledge or action, be it human or divine, can stand up to time. Hence

"the Mahabharata is about Time, the human race is about Time, the Mahabharata starts the human race"

(Ranjit)

Neither human nor divine knowledge or action therefore achieves harmony with eternal time. It can do so, only, by trying again and again, that is by cyclical repetition. Hence

"Vishnu comes to earth 10 times, but he has to come again, some gods are brought to earth to do good but Krishna comes so that the war

takes place because there is a limit to evil. He prevents other bad things from happening"

(Ranjit)

"and the war marked the end of time from there everything settled and life started again.....it's not like the end of the second world war, that's too small, if you think back to the boy in the English Mahabharata, the people in the story were his generation and we're his generation, he was part of them and we're included, we've come out of them we're somewhere in the middle of Time"

(Sefali)

At every stage in Time, however, there are certain Gods who preside over the fate of the earth

"Bhisma has a functional state throughout....hes like Vyasa, they watch over everything, they are present at the whole thing." (Sefali).

This transcendence of individual characters can apply, not only to humans through reincarnation but also to the gods whose very identities merge into eachother

"Vishnu came as Krishna and Vishnu is everywhere. When Ganesha takes off his mask we see that he is also Vishnu and Krishna. This means that god doesn't have to be just one thing" (Malati)

Even the gods do not know what is timelessly good and bad. Krishna in identifying with bad and good is somehow trusted to know the timeless difference between the two.

"But there are some things that the gods can never protect you against like time, you see where they show how the gods amuse themselves in the heavens and they say that the gods play with humans like pawns but time throws the dice"

(Sefali p32)

So while pragmatic action is possible for both gods and humans and gods have access to moral judgements higher than those of humans, ultimately Time rules.

END NOTES

As this is an account of research in progress, it would be inappropriate here to start drawing hard and fast conclusions. Further work needs to be done. In particular, the young Dhani's viewing of English language television, especially their attachment to soaps such as Neighbours and Home and Away, promises valuable comparative data and will hopefully shed further light on the significance of television in their lives. In spite of this, it is hoped that this paper goes some way towards opening up the issues raised at the beginning of it and towards demonstrating an approach which attempts to grapple with details of how young people negotiate competing realities and competing representations of those realities. This family's construction of the television as shrine and its use, overdetermined by rituals associated with Hindu public forms of worship, are nevertheless a demonstration of how television can be appropriated as an object, mobilised as text and engaged with in a powerfully enriching and educative way.

It was my good fortune to meet with such a welcoming and open family who deserve most of the credit in providing such rich data. But I should also like to acknowledge the kind assistance of my supervisor Roger Silverstone and fellow fieldworker in Southall, Gerhardt Baumann whose advice and suggestions have

June 1990

Marie Gillespie

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER FOUR

TV NEWS

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YOUNG PEOPLE'S ENAGEMENT WITH NEWS STORIES

This section of the chapter falls into two parts

First, I shall offer a brief account of how the data on young people's engagement with particular news stories was collected and present the results in tabular form. I shall then explain how and I grouped these stories for the purposes of analysis and the rationale underlying those groupings. I will then summarise the criteria upon which young people select from among the range of news stores

Secondly, I shall offer a more detailed description and analysis of young people's engagement with

a) National news b) Local news c) Global news

DATA ON MOST IMPORTANT NEWS STORIES OF 1990

Thirty four 15-16 year olds were asked to make a list of what they, themselves, thought were the ten most important news stories of 1990. This exercise was conducted in January 1991 in the school setting in different contexts. Fourteen of the respondents divided into four groups based on friendship and thus negotiated their lists which they presented on tape. The remaining twenty completed them individually and presented them in written form consequently there was little or no negotiation in the selection of stories. This needs to be born in mind when interpreting the figures because although thirty four participated only twenty four lists were produced.

A straightforward count of the various news stories was made and then different ways of grouping and sorting the stories was attempted. A total of 203 news stoires (out of a potential 240) were listed. Thirty seven responses were missing. Two girls, both teenage migrants, were unable to complete the lists and some respondents could not think of ten issues. (see overleaf). There was a clustering of figures around The Gulf War (23) and Margaret Thatcher's resignation (21) the two most widely covered news stories prior to the exercise. Thereafter the Poll Tax (19), The World Cup (17), the murder of Kuldeep Sekhon (13) and the abduction of 'Baby Amies' (13) were mentioned in over half of the respondents lists.

After scrutinising the lists it appeared that most stories fell into either national, local, global or international groupings. Now whilst these categories are not those of the respondents they offer an

analytical framework with which to investigate the question of young people's engagement with different news items and in doing so assist in providing some coherence to the ostensibly disparate and extensive lists which the exercise generated.

It may be argued that the sample is very small and that therefore the data do not lend themselves to discovery of patterns or trends. However, it should be noted that this exercise was but a small part of more comprehensive interviewing, observation and casual conversations. This has enabled the cross referencing and cross checking of data in order to enhance validity and reliability.

TABLE1; NEWS STORIES OF MOST INTEREST TO YOUNG PEOPLE IN 1990

number lists 24
 number respondents 34
 valid number of news stories 203
 missing 37

NATIONAL POLITICS

Mararet Thatcher's Resignation	21
Poll Tax	19
John Major's Election as PM	5
The Recession	5
	<u>TOTAL 50</u>

LOCAL NEWS: CRIME

MURDERS

Kuldip Singh Sekhon	13
Surinder Gill	6
Pushpa Bhatti	4

The Kidnap of Baby Amies	13
Gangs	2
Rape by man posing as muslim priest	3

TOTAL 41

GLOBAL ISSUES

The Gulf War	23
The release of Nelson Mandela	10
Environmental Destruction	4

TOTAL 37

INTERNATIONAL ITEMS: VARIOUS

The collapse of the Berlin wall	7
Romanian Babies	6
Rajiv Gandhi Loses Election	2
Benazir Bhutto Loses Election	3
Changes in Russia	5
Tiannamen Square	3
Europe (EMS and Tunnel)	5

TOTAL 31

DISASTERS

Californian Earthquake	6
The Lockerbie Crash	9
Hillsborough Stadium	3

TOTAL 18

OTHER

The World Cup	17
Other sports events	8
Salman Rushdie	6

TOTAL 23

The difficulty of situating the Salman Rusdie Affair in any of these categories led to thinking of an alternative grouping of items of specifically 'Asian' concern.

<u>Local murders</u>	
Kuldip Singh Sekhon	13
Surinder Gill	6
Pushpa Bhatti	4
<u>other</u>	
abduction of baby Amies	13
Gangs	2
Rape by man posing as Muslim priest	3
Salman Rushdie	6
Rajiv Gandhi Loses Election	2
Benazir Bhutto Loses Election	3
<u>TOTAL 42</u>	

From this it can be deduced that such a grouping ranks items of 'Asian' concern alongside national and local stories and prior to Global Stories suggesting a strong engagement and interest in such stories. On the other hand it is worthy of note that stories from or about the Indian subcontinent are conspicuously few in number perhaps suggesting a relative lack of interest in events there in the last year or alternatively a reflection of the lack of priority and coverage given by the western tv news to recent disturbances in New Delhi and Kashmir. But we shall return to this point later.

My main interest in grouping the stories into the categories of local and global, national and international was firstly to try to assess the preponderance of each and secondly to begin to assess their inter-relationship

a)PREPONDERANCE OF LOCAL TO GLOBAL

The following figures represent the percentage out of 203 news stories listed

National news stories	25%
'Asian'	21%
Local	20%
Global	18%
International	15%

b) INTER-RELATIONSHIPS

The categories are not mutually exclusive but related
ie glocal news event have local consequences
local news events can assume national importance
events in India can have local repercussions

The analytical leverage that above categories offer us should not blind us to the interdependence between these spheres. Global issues like the Gulf War affect people's lives in Southall. But the equation, sometimes works in the opposite direction; A local murder, considered as 'racist murder' can become symbolic of a more widespread upsurge of racism on the european 'continent'.

The categories local, global and national and international are not mutually exclusive especially in a place like Southall where news from the Indian Subcontinent can have dramatic local consequences and thus itself generate local incidents which become news.

In this situation, young people may have very complex sets of relationships to negotiate between notions of parental and peer cultures, religious and secular values, local, national and international loyalties and allegiances.

News of religious conflict or racist incidents are highly sensitive for most people in Southall. Many young people are forced to question, challenge, assert or repudiate certain values and loyalties. The 'Asian' unity born out of local necessity is strong when threatened by aggressive or racist outsiders but fragile when religious sectarianism or castism takes hold. Pluralistic societies mean that a plurality of values, roles, loyalties and contexts have to be negotiated. A central thread of the remaining chapter concerns the culturally specific engagement with certain news stories and the ways in which young people use their experiences of tv news to negotiate relationships to local and national cultures.

Let us now go on to examine the different criteria of interest and engagement

CRITERIA OF INTEREST AND ENGAGEMENT

In order for a news story to 'catch' attention the following criteria have been identified

RELEVANCE - A news item is more likely to spark an interest if it is seen to have some bearing on one's life. This sense of pertinence to one's life may be more or less direct. For example, a common criteria of interest is summed up by Paramjit, a 16 year old girl

"I'm interested in news that directly affects me or my family"

HUMAN INTEREST - the ability to see (albeit often in the most abstract way rather than as one lives) all human beings, regardless of colour or creed as worthy of respect and dignity and as possessing certain fundamental human rights is a key theme across many of the interviews. Thus, certain news stories provoke an affective engagement which can be deep (The famine in Ethiopia, The Romanian Babies, The release of Nelson Mandela)

SECURITY AND THREAT - One of the paradoxical elements of news viewing is that news is both a source of information about the most dangerous and life threatening of events (i.e. attacks on one's body, mind or home, accidents, disasters, illness and disease), and a confirmation of one's own security. News viewing can provoke fear and anxiety in viewers about the potential threats that surround them locally and beyond. At the same time we watch from the relative security of our homes (some argue that this is important when considering the way leisure has become 'privatised and domesticated'. In this sense news viewing may help relieve some of the tensions of life.

"whenever you watch news you always see that there are people suffering in the world and that makes you feel grateful sometimes to have a roof over your head and food to eat"

(Saira, 16 year old girl)

In other words news is not only a source of tension and anxiety but at the same time it encourages the release of tension and the management of anxiety.

PROXIMITY AND DISTANCE - Both may be defined geographically or affectively. Thus, closeness in time (immediacy), place (locality) or relationship (i.e. to one's parent's culture of origin) may all be

invoked as criteria of interest

"I'm interested in news that is close to home, that you can relate to"
(Amar, 16 year old girl)

However, in Southall, the geographically distant may be synonymous with the affectively close

"I'm more interested in international than in local news, it's more exciting [...] I want to keep in touch with whats going on in India cos I've always been interested in it but also with whats happening out there in the rest of the world rather than just the small community that we live in" (Navdeep, 17 year old boy)

Mohinderpal and Diljit are two 16 year old Sikh boys. They are both one year vocational students. This is an edited transcript of an informal discussion between them. It took place in the sixth form recreation area at school. I knew these students well and had previously taught them for one year. I overheard their conversation about TV and asked them if I could listen to them and tape their conversation. They knew of my interest in young people and TV. I told them that, if they didn't mind I would prefer not to participate but simply to listen. The conversation, though obviously affected by my presence, was entirely of their own direction. I made no interventions apart from interested non-verbal gestures.

D- as you get older it plays a more influential part of your lives you get to know everything about tv, when you're younger, you take it for granted, its something there, you don't pay money for it, its just there, you watch it, go to bed, wake up, go to school, watch it, when you grow older, you can relate to things on tv, like our problems and the way we live

M- when I was 12 and 13 I used to look out for 'my age things', I didn't used to care about what the older lot were doing [...] As you get older you see the same kind of things happen in real life and its like listening to gossip you get interested. In the future, it will become more tight. When you're young you watch everything, as you get older its different, you become more choosy

D- when I was younger I used to watch a lot of fictional things, like a lot of space things that didn't exist, like 'Thunderbirds', you start watching all these programmes, educational programmes and things which help you, things that would have bored you before

M-like my parents would really force me to watch the news, the whole family had to watch the news, because they used to force us. That used to turn us away from it, but when we got older we knew we had to watch the news

D- parents tell you to watch the news, my dad he asks me to watch the news, especially if he misses it, he comes home from work and he says, "Oh! my friends at work told me that on the news someone started a war with India?" and then he'll ask you to tell him what they said on the news

M- it's something to talk about

D- the moment he sees Asians on tv he wants us to watch it, not Eastenders or that but the news, he wants us to watch it, he calls us down and we've got to watch it and even if you're in the bath or something he'll start shouting, "there's something on about India" and I don't understand it, because there's a lot of Indians in this country, but a lot of them don't understand the news, so you have to translate, but they're crazy to hear news about India, but not a lot of white people are interested in Indian news so I think they should translate some things, sometimes, as well into Punjabi and Hindi as well

M-oh yeah! cos his dad doesn't understand the news in English

D- he calls us down to translate it for him, like Network East when that was on we used to watch it every weekend but then it got too carried away and started getting into films and that and they stopped doing the news, but now they watch the 'Mahabharata', I record it for them. To them, its like watching 'Neighbours', to me, it drags on, even though they know the story, the 'Mahabharata' relates to their culture, they want to believe in it cos its their culture, they want us to believe in it but we don't bother watching

M- they know the storyline

D- my parents are really happy when there are religious programmes on or Indian films on

M-but theres a limit to it, when Indian films are on they really enjoy it but when there's an Indian film on that Indian people find hard to

believe in, Indian people don't like to talk about prostitutes, you know so when 'Salaam Bombay' came on it sounded quite good, like it means 'Hallo Bombay!', they watched it for 2 minutes and then they walked away. They said were not watching it, this its stupid, men making young girls into prostitutes, they're strict on that

D- I think its just that we're there and they don't want us to be influenced by programmes like that

M-they think were going to be influenced

D-that's it, my dad forces me, they understand fairly good English, and they don't exactly force me but they draw me towards watching the news. Nowadays I watch the news a lot and now I've got quite interested in it, but now when we watch 'Neighbours' and you see kissing scenes with Scott and Charlene and all that they kind of tell me off, but if they get carried away kissing and that then I myself get the remote control and put it on the other side, if my parents are there because what I've been learned is not to watch things like that, so it's the way you're brought up. In the begining you don't watch much scenes like that and then you start growing up and those things are more on tv, you can't really help watching it cos on most programmes there's swearing or some mention of sex or that, at times I do get embarassed if it gets carried away,

M- you know, when our parents look at us, my brothers and sisters, and we're speaking English they think that it's because the TV programmes, and everytime they say to us, 'why don't you speak Punjabi, right, everytime I notice he has to repeat himself over and over again, [...]' but like if its Eastenders or Brookside and someone's arguing he says 'do you have to watch these people arguing?' and then he says, 'see the words are the same!'. He thinks that when were arguing we speak the same and then he thinks were copying them and I go, 'but dad! you always say that, its a programe I'm not gonna start copying them and then my munn tells my dad to be quiet and leave us watch and no matter how many times we see it, he'll still say it and if someones kissing my dad will just throw a fit, 'is that what you're here for?'

D- it's the same in my house, it's my dad, its mainly the father its because he's meant to be the breadwinner and look after the family

M-so we've got to be careful about what we watch

[..]

D- like there's a new generation, its different, like they brought us to this country, they can't expect us to go their way, we've been brought up like the English kids have been in their schools and we just do the same things and they get angry with us but when our kids grow up well be different we'll be experienced here

M-I think nowadays children are more mature, maybe its just our culture that's maturing faster now [..] I think that's partly tv and other influences around them

[..]

D-my dad's reached the limit, he says that tv is driving me mad, he says its making me mad and he makes me laugh cos its really funny, you can imagine saying that in front of the whole school, 'tv can make you mad!' but to him it's really true

M-it weakens the control that your parents have over you

D-they're your parents and they think that they should have control over you and your mind and everything

[...]

D-recently there's been a lot on the news and documentaries about India and Indians, like, about racism and when my mum sees things lie that she gets really angry, she does, she goes the white people they shouldn't do things like that ..thats the only time I've seen her responding like angry [..] when things like the Kuldeep Sekhon murder come on the news the whole school was talking about it the next day

M- or when there's anything on racism, like that programme on racist attacks in Feltham and Hounslow, the whole family come down just to watch that and everybody was there and my dad was saying you know when the police came and they didn't do anything he was saying they're all the same, the police they don't do anything

D-we talked about it the whole day in school, we started saying, God! it started over a chocolate egg and we're thinking oh my God! can they really get that bad

M-and for us, our enemies were the white people because it was portrayed as if they were the cause, cos they had actual evidence cos they had hidden cameras and all that and so I think, I know it's true, we kept swearing and saying it's bad, that it should not happen, those men were really bad [...] if it was against Jewish people, our response wouldn't have been like that at all but when it's our own culture, we think, like, we should be aware of racism other people should be aware of it and how its affected us, the way its portrayed is that we should talk about this and communicate to others so that's what were doing

D-when you hear these things you feel you're really upset even if they werent Indian I would still have hated those people really badly cos of the language they use, they way they are, the white people, it really makes me sick and then, after that, you forget and then when you see it again you just feel sick, like it's happening to your lot, cos you hear these stories and they dont happen to you, well you do get called pakis and wogs and all that but not always by white people, you can get called by black people and even your own caste can turn round and call you names, well not our caste,

M-you remember Sati and then lot Karamjit (jat sikhs) they go round saying pakis and wogs and all that to other people and they even insulted me with racist words, I was thinking they're sitting there saying we should learn white people this and that, I was thinking they should learn themselves

M- white people think we are invading their territory and they don't like to see Asian people as successful and they think of their jobs [...]

D-if all our family was there (in India) I'd love to live there but then like I went there on holiday, after a few weeks I started missing programmes and its funny I started missing tv, I started getting bored, I was missing england

M-when you watch programmes and you see India and its portrayed as Hindus fighting sikhs you know before we went, they were fighting really badly on the news and we didnt really want to go and my dad

D-its a good thing that the news showed that though, it saved a lot of lives cos people who were going to India, they were getting killed

M-I was going to say the opposite, cos when we went there was no fighting going on, visually, and we were safe to roam the streets or fields by ourselves at night time and

D- you know how it is in India, if something bad happens, the whole of the village, well the blokes, the governors in the town get together as a family and want to get rid of whatever or whoever is causing trouble

M-a hindu man came in a planted a bomb under the chair of the superintendant of police, we went the night before, he had been blown up, they don't show none of that in England and all the streets were patrolled by police and I found that sick that it so easy to get away with it in India

D- I think Asians have done worse to us than white people have, like the old Hindu religion, they destroyed our temple, that was our holy place for centuries, that's more than a white person can do in a hundred years, they killed innocent kids, this happened once before when Muslims jumped into wells with their kids in their arms and just drowned themselves instead of getting shot, that was when Gandhi was alive, when Hindus were fighting against Muslims and now its happening again, the

fight over Kashmir, like it belongs to India and the muslims want it, the muslims start building up in the mountains, they build little huts and five years later you see how there are so many more and that's why they think it's theirs, India wasn't doing much about it

M- I'm not saying it should belong to them or to us, but if they get it there's gonna be too much friction between the Punjab and Pakistan cos they're close together and if one gets something the other is gonna get upset and it could explode. None of that is actually shown on tv, what is shown the Hindus fighting with Sikhs, end of story. When they were covering the Golden Temple, they should have shown something from the Hindu point of view as well, they focussed too much on the Sikhs and that stirred up trouble among Sikhs, hating Hindus and that, tv brought the war over here, look at the guy in 'The Maharaja' restaurant on the Broadway, he got killed by Sikh extremists

D-everyone was arguing at my gurudwara, I was so embarrassed, like at my gurudwara, it was sad man, they were giving out Indian sweets when Indira Gandhi died, they were giving out boxes of laddu free

M-I felt sorry for her

D- I thought they shouldn't have done that to a woman

M- and what is even more worse, it was a holy man that shot her and that's embarrassing to our religion

D- but it's a thing of the past now, when it happened I felt happy that our religion was happy that she was dead, right, but then later on, I thought, how can people be so sick and celebrate someone's death and when Bhindra Wallah died, they had all these processions

M-the young people, they were even worse, there was a lot that were happy that she had died and they lit fireworks and they showed all that on the news, it was embarrassing

D- I've learned more from tv about india than from my parents, I cant read the papers, but when you see these things on the news

M-the parents get confused themselves and find it hard to explain so when they show it on tv you know whats going on, otherwise weve all been brought up to know about our own country

D-lots of people were celebrating cos other people were celebrating but they didnt know nothing about what was going on, like the details, but most people found out from tv and because it was stereotyped that the Hindus were attacking the Sikhs that was what made people retaliate, still when they showed her funeral everybody watched it and I even heard that people were crying when they were watching it, Sikh people not Hindus

M-my cha cha said good but my mum and dad were sad but I also know a lot of people, who were really happy and now look what's happening to India and nobody gives a damn about India, all these young people they just think, oh we're Khalistani, Sati don't know nothing about it, Narinderjit, I told you, he was the only pure one in our class, I told you, he knew everything about it, he was right, I knew everything they said was rubbish

D-in his family religion means a lot, some people don't want to go into depth but we in our family didn't celebrate cos, you think, if that was my mother and someone killed her... but some people they didn't want to think in depth, they just wanna think 'Great! she's dead!'

M-Narinderjit, he's a pure Singh and he's Jat and he's done the 5 K's and that's what I mean by pure and because he's been brought up that way, he knows about religion and politics and he can talk about it and you just want to listen cos you know he don't bullshit like Sati and that lot who, even though they're Jat, know nothing

D-we used to go every sunday to Havelock (gurudwara)and we used to meet him there, our parents are religious but when they came to England, my

grandad is a holy man, but when they come to England they get spoiled they lost their ways and started going out drinking and boozing

M-my dad never drank or smoked before he came here and he even smoked and drank when he went home. Now he's older, you know, people get scared when they get closer to death, so he's gone religious again, he had a hair cut but now he's grown his hair back 2 years ago, but my grandfather, he was really respected...my grandad was really holy, he didn't have a surname in the Sikh baptism just 'Giani', that's holy man and then we got the surname Bal from the three letters where he came from Bilbar so we didn't have a surname when we came

D-the next generation I hope they grow up to be different, we've grown up from one depth and the next generation, they'll stick up more for their rights more

M- we'll teach them Sikhism, the depths and all, won't we

D- yeah, cos learning about your religion makes you feel happy

M-some think that just they're a Jat, they know everything, we know more than them but they would boast about being Jat, it makes me sick, I never would agree with anyone until Narinderjit spoke, cos he was always right [...]

D-he's not goody goody, he swears and mucks about like we do but soon as some one brings in the subject religion then I would know that I was at ease with him speaking cos he knows

M-I used to go to the temple every Friday and feel really comfortable, we believe in the Hindu side, we're not Hindu but my mum believes in it, so I go to the mandir (temple) and everytime I go I get funny looks, cos I wear a turban they know I'm Sikh, and people say, why do you go to the mandir?

D- its different nowadays, the religions are mixing up a bit in Southall, like they've got the Guru Granth (Sikh holybook) in the mandir (Hindu temple) you bow your head to the holy pictures in the mandir, and now and we done that to the Guru Granth as well they're crossing over a little bit

1.2.90 The day after Kulip Sekhon's funeral a discussion was held about the murder, the funeral/ protest march and its media coverage on the previous evening. 7 girls and one boy took part. They were aged between 16 and 17. None of the girls had attended the funeral but Abjinder, (ab, in the transcripts) was the only boy in the group who had. They are all A level students and the discussion, which I taped with their permission, took place in an A'level Sociology class. This is an edited version of the transcript. The discussion lasted 1 hour.

[..] a- The worst thing is that he was married with 5 daughters

m- all his daughters were under 10

b- he only did cabbying part time to bring in a little extra cash for his family

a- he came to England from India in the late 1970's, he lived on Saxon Rd and he worked for SAS Airways full-time

p- the white man who killed him lived on Golf Links Estate but his girlfriend lives on an estate in Feltham I think

a-she's been arrested cos she withheld evidence from the police

b-they questioned her but she wouldn't tell them

a-she washed his clothes (all aghast)

ab-he was a racial attacker in the area and he had a couple of convictions for racial attacks, it was in the papers

p- do you really think it was a racist murder?

ab-yeah, it was a racist murder.

a-well that day he rang for a cab and he knew black people worked there, and this is what I heard, my mum told me, he goes someone's going to come and I'm going to kill a wog

p-he said that to his girlfriend? how did your mum know that?

a-cos where she works with people who go to the trial and that's what the girlfriend said in court

ab-his own mother testified against him and she actually said in court that her son was a racist and on the phone that morning she heard him say he was going to kill a paki [...] so she couldn't have agreed with what he done [...] it was premeditated

[..]

me- how did you first hear about it?

p- I first heard about it from mates at school

a- yeah but then I read about it in the paper after

p-but they didn't tell you much

an-yeah they were just repeating the basic things

p-they don't tell you much about the the criminal compared with Mr. Sekhon

am-I think I first heard it from Sunrise radio cos they were having a minute's silence each hour for him

gu- I read about it in the paper but it was really basic you know cab driver, 5 kids and later on it came out that it was a white guy

p-we didn't think that much about it at that time cos you read so much about this one being attacked and another murdered so never really thought about it

me-why not

gu-cos that sort of thing has happened before like the little boy in the playground (cf. The McDonald Enquiry) he was stabbed by a white kid. Now that's just as serious especially as he was younger and it was bad for a while, an all that, but then you never heard much about that

b-and there was that woman who was murdered in Southall Park that was really serious as well but there wasn't so much made of that

k-the boy who killed her used to go to this school, we know a dinner lady who remembers him, they couldn't control him and he got chucked out

a-yeah he was in my brother's year and he was telling me about it, he was of mixed race, he was half white and half Carribean [...] I've known him since I was little, I used to play football with him he was a couple of years older than me

k- when he was small, he used to dribble all the time and he used to get badly teased and bullied and then when he grew up he used to take it out on other people and the dinner lady who we know, she knew him from when he was little and she said he was quite a nice little boy but then later he turned

ab-and his mum used to nag him a lot when he was little

k-and they say he was high on drugs when he attacked that woman but I think he would eventually take it out on someone whether he was drugged or not

gu-her name was Pushpa Bhatti and she was a schoolteacher of about 50

b-it could have been co she was a teacher

ab-he used to have psycho attacks, just go mad, get really angry over nothing, like if someone tackled him with the ball and then he'd beat up someone

b-drugs is part of it but I think he was disturbed mentally

k- but Sekhon's murder was premedited and it was an Asian man

b-the one in the park could have been premeditated

p-I think the difference is that in the Sekhon murder you don't know much about the guy and it seems completely motiveless, he was a true criminal but it seems with the Pushpa Bhatti murder it seems that evryone sympathises more with him because he was bullied you can understand why he went and done it to a teacher

gu- but Mr. Sekhon was stabbed 54 times that's disgusting

p- people assume that cos there was no money stolen or the car wasn't smashed up that it was completely motiveless [...] it could be that he wasn't as well off as he wanted to be and he could sort of blame it on Indians, that they seem well off all these shop owners and maybe he was just taking it out on them

b- I think it might have been a racial attack

ab-he was a National Front member, you don't actually advertise it if you are a member, he belonged to a special squad and he was doing a 'hit' as they call it, they've got what you call, 'The Real National Front' and the 'National Front' and the NF go to towns and fight with Asians and Blacks but the RNF are like a squad that kill people

am-it was racial in that it was someone who hates people who are not of the same colour and you have to understand why someone is racist you can't just say that person is racist, whether it's hate or jealous [...]

am- it's really scared everybody, especially parents

k-it's made them more wary of white people, they might look at a white person and think he's most probably racist as well

gu-it just backs up their ideas about racism but I don't think that's true for us lot, cos even though we know there is racism , I don't know it's different, I suppose our parents have more experience of it

b-the easiest reason to find is that it's a racist attack but it might not have been, it could just be that he was mad or high on drugs

ab- I went along to the march yesterday cos I heard it was a racist murder but some of the boys and even the girls of my age they were saying that it was being hyped up, that it wasn't really a racist murder. They were saying that we should be aware of the white people down there and they're just gonna feel hatred cos I was talking to some people, I won't say who they were, and they were saying we should just go and get them back and it has really already increased tension and made people feel violent

gu-it makes you feel sad like when I hear about the other murder, MrGill down Hounslow , they pulled him out of his big mercedez and he was an Asian man and it makes you think, it could have been anybody, like with Mr. sekhon that could have been any taxi driver and especially as it was his last day

ab-and the other thing you think he couldn't have died at the first stab and look how much pain he must of went through and I saw his body yesterday and it looked pretty messed up, everyone looked at it as they went by and uhg his body was decomposing, man, it's like three months since he died, and he had a turban and glasses on to try and cover it up

but you could see all the holes and cuts from the autopsy, I've never seen anything like it [..]

am-although it was his funeral, because it was a racist murder, people took the opportunity to stand up and say we're not going to take this anymore

b-actually I didnt agrree with the march the funeral should be a family affair and obviously people shout and that there will be some backlash

gu-I dont think it should have been on the same day but the protest probably wouldnt have been so successful, people saw the body and saw how upset people were and so it was very dramatic

p-usually in sikh funerals children or young people don't go, adults deal with it that's why our parents didn't want us to go, it's not seen to be right for young people to go I don't even go when it's one of my own relatives, your parents try to protect you from things like that

am-if it had been my family I wouldn't have liked it to be so open to the public, it should be a private affair, like I wouldn't mind if there was a march in remembrance but I wouldn't have like a march and funeral at the same time, but obviously the family didn't mind so that was all right

p-but it's like she said it's more dramatic like that but if that's what the family want then it's ok

am- but I think it was Southall Monitoring Group (SMG) who organised it .. they deal with racial attacks the victims and that

p-they've made themselves known through that now, they got themselves on TV

am-you have to have people who are committed to the community otherwise no-one would have known about it, it would have just passed by it's good

that SMG were there to support the family, the fact that they had five daughters was also important, Asians don't really, well, don't they find it hard if they've got a lot of daughters and then have to marry them you know the dowry and that

p- on the news last night they showed people shouting and protesting and a lot of people complained about that cos they said it didn't give MR. Sekhon enough respect

am- but still it did show everyone that these things happen to Asian people, I think it might make people more aware

p-but it might have the opposite effect as well, you think of white people watching and they're probabaly sitting there thinking, none of this trouble would have happened if they'd stayed where they belong

b-they probably think oh the Asians are taking over our country, our jobs and houses and now they're always on the bloody telly

ab-there were a lot of police there, they thought there was going to be trouble, they were stopping people and searching them, they suspect you. I got stopped because I was carrying a bag probably they were worried that people might bring weapons along

b-they can't believe that the people of Southall can have a peaceful march, they think they're troublemakers and that's what comes across on the news

ab-there was some Indians winding them up, anyway, cos no-one's gonna start trouble and that but a lot of people came up with their friends and just kinda like stood around in groups on corners, the police were scared, you didn't see the riot squads, trying to be clever, you know, parking up in the back streets but everyone knows they're there cos like after the riots everone knows they're bound to be there, you should have seen the convoys of them on Merrick Rd, people were willing to but they wouldn't they search you when there's 2 of you but not if there's more

cos then you can cover eachother..they jumped out of a metro and stopped me like I was a criminal or something [..]

those other murders of Gurdeep Singh Chaggar and others that brought black and Asian people together because of the police and the way they handle it

a- they were saying on the news that people in Southall were angry because the police never do nothing about racial attacks and that but I don't know, maybe they do happen, but not so much in Southall, if this is a racist murder then it's the only one I've heard of in Southall, aprt from those 2 murders ages ago, I don't think white people would dare to attack Asians in Southall-you know Mr. Sekhon was killed in feltham or Hayes, not in Southall [..]

ab-not everyone went along for the march a lot went to pay their respect and come away others went to see what was going on, but a lot of people felt hatred to white people, in general, even to the teachers who were there, they probably found it difficult to believe that white people care that much, they think they've got a cheek turning up - it's their race that did it, but there again, others would be pleased to see that white people care [..] the police act differently with whites and asians they'll help the whites but they won't act as quickly to help asians

A-the gap is widening between Asians and white

ab-but girls wouldn't feel as much anger

p-we'd feel anger but we wouldn't fight

ab-if Sekhon had been a gang member or if he had a 'holy' (i.e.of the gang called Holy Smoke) in his family, they would go round and get his friends who were racists on Golf Links there would have been a full 'hit' on Golf Links ..I'm not saying anything but would the girls do the same?

FIELNOTES 21.11.70

There was a rare mood of elation around the school this afternoon, an elation that usually only occurs at the end of term or when a major disco is happening; the cause, Margaret Thatcher's resignation. I have rarely witnessed a news event to have spread through the school as this one did with the rapidity of wild fire. Those who had been home to lunch had caught the news after 'Home and Away' and rushed to school as messengers might bearing news that would cause rejoicing. As I moved across the playground I watched groups cheering and 'slagging' Mrs. T with unprecedented vigour 'She's gone the silly cow she's gone!' 'No more Poll tax!' 'We're gonna have a party tonight', they sang.

As I entered the school there was a buzz around the corridors and it seemed as if the entire school was, for those moments, thinking about the same thing. By 3.30 that afternoon, it would have surprised me if any pupil had not heard the news. In both of my classes pupils wanted to discuss the rise and fall of the Iron Lady. It became clear that for most of their lives she had been in power, as such, she represents an archtypal English woman to some of the kids, even though, re-iterating the joke, some say they find it hard to conceive of her as a woman at all. They discussed her personality traits; her snobbishness; her self-righteousness; her toughness; her cruelty to the poorer sections of society through the poll tax; her betrayal by her own cabinet; her husband and children etc I picked up some of the comments but will have to do more focussed interviews

Permjit - the news was shocking, I never thought she'd do it

Suresh - she thought she could fight back but she couldn't she knew she was going to lose

Davinder - she couldn't take the shame, she would have been shamed up in front of the whole world

Suresh - I bet the USA will be pissed off, old Reagan especially, they were 'lovers' (laughs)

Davinder - I was so happy to hear the news, she did what everyone wanted her to do for a change

Delbir-My mum was so happy she said we'd celebrate

Juanita- I couldn't be bothered to celebrate she just makes me sick to tell you the truth

Saira- my family were happy she resigned but I felt sorry for her, even though I'M not a conservative, I think she had guts, she was badly betrayed by people she thought were her friends and that's a bad thing to happen to anybody

Farida- after 11 years we're free of her and her stupid policies

FIELDNOTES Thursday 22.11.90

The school continues to buzz with the news of Thatcher's resignation. There's been a lot of talk about her farewell speech which seems to provoke mixed feelings. Quite a few of the girls I spoke to thought she showed dignity and courage and went down respectably. Others were happy that she would no longer be appearing on TV everyday. Certainly it seems as if everybody has watched the news several times last night as Gita said "we kept watching the news over and over again I don't know what we expected to happen, I think we were afraid that she might make a comeback"

Others talked about being glued to their sets, certainly it seems to be the main topic of conversation everywhere. A consistent pattern seems to be an attempt to reconstruct the story as if it were a major political intrigue - some of their stories take on Shakespearean overtones- as if it were Macbeth - the play they are most familiar with- certainly the plot to overthrow her seems to be of great interest but that's also probably a result of the tabloids emphasis on her downfall as betrayal.

Much of their talk is also based on what they've heard on TV except they attach their own names to characters i.e Geoffrey Howe has become 'How can I do it'; One French A level student refers to Mrs. T as 'Tas de Chair' meaning heap of flesh, which I thought was rather clever. Heseltine is called 'Tarzan' but here, one can detect the influence of 'Spitting Image', which is popular among many, in their irreverent attitudes. There is definitely a lot of gloating over the way she was betrayed and what they see as the underhand way in which she was ousted.

A lot of the talk is humorous and although some contemplate 'her destruction of the public sector' (as one 6th former put it) and the political implications of her resignation- few seem concerned that a Conservative government is still in power - indeed such is the mood of jubilation that it seems that there is an almost euphoric assumption that everything will now be put right.

Certainly, what has become clear over the last two days is that these events have more than any other issue led people to come out with their resentment of the poll tax; of her as prime minister; with their party political persuasions. There seems to be a general consensus that Asian families were hit hardest by the poll tax - certainly there was a news report the other evening which many students saw that probably raised their awareness of this. Most say they will vote labour but I'll need to check this out. I'll also need to check out the pockets of support for Thatcher and the Conservatives more generally since in the current atmosphere of what can only be described as 'joy', it would be brave to come out in support of them.

THE GULF WAR

(i) Discussion held in Media Studies Class on 18.1.91.

These are 16 year old one year vocational students

It was decided by the group that each person would give an opinion and so each spoke in turn, spontaneously, with no set agenda.

Inderjeet - America shouldn't have gone in, its a stupid war, they should have kept their nose out of it

Rajinder - I disagree America done the right thing otherwise Saddam would have gone into Saudi

Brijesh - I dont think there should be a war a lot of innocent people are going to die, no-one's right in this situation

Rajesh - they should have left it to Saddam Hussein and the Kuwaiti president to sort it out

Dalvinder - I don't think the war is justified, I don't think that actions have to speak louder than words, America and the allies are only there for the oil

Saira- America shouldn't have interfered the only reason is for oil, if it were bananas they wouldn't have bothered, initially Kuwait belonged to Iraq it was the Americans who put a border there, like they did to India and Pakistan I do agree with what Saddam Hussein has done, not totally like he shouldn't have bombed Israel, but it's not a holy war, Saddam Hussein is just asking God for help

Rajinder - the Kuwaitis and Saudis asked them to go in, plus it's human nature if a country needs oil then they're gonna do something about it, Saddam Hussein made it clear that he wasn't going to leave anyway

Abida - I think the whole thing is childish they should have talked it out I dont know what to think of Saddam Hussein in some ways he's right and in others he's wrong - he has been killing his own people

Paramjit - some say the deadline was a bad thing but I don't think they would have ever come to a solution by talking it through cos Saddam Hussein is not that type of person to listen to other people he does what he wants. I think the deadline was a good thing - it was against the United Nations rules - he shouldn't have done it cos like India and Pakistan have gone their own way but what would happen if India decided to invade Pakistan?

Nadia - America shouldn't have gone in cos when Iran and Iraq were having their war Kuwait was taking their oil and when Saddam Hussein asked for the money back they wouldn't give it

Saira - the Americans didn't offer Saddam Hussein any concessions to get out [...] he couldn't just go back with nothing in his hand, it wasn't just a little money they owed Iraq, we're talking about millions

Surinder- I think ones as bad as the other

Gita - thousands of pounds are being spent on destroying buildings and everything, innocent people are being killed and innocent people have their rights too, they have the right to live [...] people have lost their husbands [...] they have a right to something as well, they should have their rights protected [...] husbands are supporting it but who's going to support their wives and their kids if they die? I think Saddam Hussein should do something -they should stop the war immediately

Rajinder - but when you've got a stalemate you can't just let the situation go on for years and years, America had to go in cos Saddam Hussein was dominating that part of the Middle East. I thought the reporters in Baghdad were brave they were in the hotel when the firing was happening, they could have got killed at any time

Gita - the only reason John Major gave a broadcast to the nation was to unite the people and persuade them that they're doing the right thing

(ii) This is an extract from a discussion which took place between two Muslim boys during their lunch hour in their classroom. I asked them if I could tape it and was present at the discussion

Adnam-Saddam Hussein is probably not as bad as they say he is [...] some muslims are being deported because they are a threat to the race, cos they start wars here, people like Arabs, mainly Iraqis

Adil - this war is going to badly affects my religion soon it will be Ramadan, there should be peace - Muslims are taught that we shouldn't fight one another, it says so in the Koran, so they shouldnt be fighting.

Adnam - most Muslims don't like the war, mosques are being attacked, our religion is being attacked in Britain, they're not only destroying a country but also the world - all of them - all these nuclear war planes that they're hitting is in the end going to destroy the world - it is frightening - I don't wanna die young -in the end they're probably going to destroy everyone [...] sometimes I have a feeling that I'm going to die cos its possible that they might just shoot something over here or in the middle of the core of the earth and they might just destroy it cos [...] Saddam Hussein if he wants he can destroy it - the Iraqis are just not gonna stop they'll go on fighting to the end even though they're getting killed

Adil - my parents think the USA should come out, they shouldn't waste blood for oil, also they're deporting muslims cos they think they might start a war over here [...]

Adnam - but there's too much of it on TV they should just have one TV channel which covers it all the time and let the other channels continue as normal [...]

Adil - when the haj comes muslims wont be able to go there if there's a war

(iii) These are excerpts from a discussion between Kashif, a Muslim boy of 16 years old and Reena, a 16 year old Hindu girl. It was recorded in the sixth form recreation area during the lunchtime in the week following the outbreak of the war. Both are A'level students.

Reena - the war is unnecessary, sanctions could have worked but they weren't given time. In South Africa sanctions are just beginning to work, they only gave Saddam Hussein 4 months, it could have been avoided and now innocent people are dying

Kashif - the UN didn't know about America's first attack that's why I'm against it [...] but for me it's a conflicting factor I come to school and the Gulf war is somewhere and I go home and it's different, like my mother, she sees the Gulf War on TV and she tells me, "you should be on the Arab's side! you should go and fight!" and I say, "what if I die?" and she says, "My son, you would be a martyr!", and, you know, it's just totally different and then it's, like, this anger brewing cos this Middle East issue celebrates up Islam, right, yeah, cos Saddam Hussein is a politician but he's also an Islamic leader but he uses Islam in a way just to put pressure on the USA through Muslims - I feel angry cos he's doing that but some Muslims are on his side they don't see it as the West v Middle East they see it as Islam v Christianity

Reena - a lot of Muslims are getting harassed

Kashif - I don't cos I'm in Southall

Reena - but if I were elsewhere like Liverpool I would probably get harassed cos these people don't look at you and say that's a Hindu and that's a Sikh or whatever, we're all classed as Pakis, so you can bring racism into this cos it's just an excuse for those people who are racist to go round bombing mosques and that, well anyway Kashif are you saying there's no racism in Southall?

Kashif - there is racism in Southall but it has to be subdued because there's a large number of Muslims here [...] like we have a mosque right so they're not separated like in other places where they were together [...] in Southall you can bring them together and if there were any racism against them there would be a backlash ..there would be a rather large

backlash [...] so the Muslim community in Southall can be strong and it can be unified that's why it doesn't come under threat in Southall plus everybody here, Sikhs and Hindus, most have come from the Punjab and we have close relations with each other though we might have conflicting religions there's almost this tie, everything flows in Southall

Reena - when it comes down to it we're like one, we're all coloured when it comes down to it

kashif - in places up north the Muslim minorities are less strong [...]

Reena - they're (the British media) being too severe on Saddam Hussein they think he's a Hitler just because of that one little fact - now the war aims are changing and they want to topple him as well, I mean did you see, the Italian general resigned cos he doesn't believe what's going on? [...]

I mean, we can't be sure what's going on in the war when it comes down to it they say it's a democracy but the media is biased you can see the Israelis all blood-soaked. Can you see how the Iraqis are attacked? [...] they tell us how many Iraqi casualties the 'boys' have killed but not the rest

Kashif- that's it, it's manipulation by the media, we're being manipulated because they're only showing us one side of the war, the Allies side.

Reena - if there's one British person missing there's such outrage on TV and, although I might not agree with the way the allied prisoners were paraded on TV, you've got to admit that before they showed those pictures, nobody believed him did they? so he showed them and then they go what a maniac! I mean, if India invaded Pakistan would America send all those troops in? No! it all comes down to oil, power and money that's why the Americans are there and I don't think that money is worth one human life

Have you been watching the news in recent days? - he's got his airforce into Iran to get them out of the way - he's in a desperate situation, like an animal trapped, he can't find a way out

And you know, in a way Saddam Hussein has already won the war I watched it on TV and this is it, word for word, they said 'He has done the impossible, he has stood up to the west!' - and in most Arab's eyes that means he's won. I wouldn't bring Israel into it he's a desperate man, using desperate measures

Kashif - that's not desperate that's good strategy from his point of view cos if Israel retaliated then the Middle East allies might get on his side, he would become a national hero like Nasser

Reena - he's already a national hero, that's what he's trying to become, great! Israel and America are close Israel done what the USA wanted

Kashif - isn't it the other way round?

Reena - America has created Israel, the good thing is that Israel is dependent upon the Americans, but what do the Americans offer?

Kashif - The UN, not America should take responsibility. The UN didn't even know about the first attack it should have been discussed [...]

My mother is on Saddam Hussein's side, like, she preaches that Islam is behind Saddam Hussein and she is behind Islam. It's like here (school) I almost live in both worlds, here it's like our side it's the USA side and then I go home and it's like Saddam Hussein's nawab and stuff, at home I have to keep the family order so I can't exactly have opposing views to my parents, like showing them opposing views, and like, when I go out, like say Wimbledon at the weekends and that's a highly English area, like you have to keep the social order, whatever the public views is, you might have your own views but you can't express them as well, like I might say, yeah, I'm for Saddam Hussein and then 4,000 English people come and say 'Fuck you!'

But in the sixth form its ok, we're young and we have open minds, but as people get older they don't, they have a narrow tunnel vision most of the time

Reena - but if you feel strongly why not stand up for what you believe

Kashif- If you do believe strongly enough but I'm mixed, here, I take their views, when I'm at home I take all that

Reena - yeah but do you know what you believe from inside? what do you feel not what your parents say?

Kashif - I'm for him and against him, you don't go home and have your mother saying go fight! [...] people say I'm a British Muslim but what is a British Muslim? is he more Muslim or more British? you can't exactly have an equal choice of both [...] like I'm more, it's difficult to say, I'd say more westernised, I wouldn't say I'm British [...] I suppose I'm both in different degrees in different situations, you have to put on different roles, like my mother's side and the Allies side, but if it was my mother's wish then I'd go and fight, if she felt so strongly about it [...] I could take either side [...] we have these Islamic centres and they urge me to go there [...] the mosques is OK but there are some 18-19 year olds and like some of them are fundamentalists and all for Saddam Hussein and they would carry out drastic actions if you understand what I mean, they would go past the limits of normal social behaviour [...] occasionally I come into contact with them but I'd rather not because they try to force their views on me

Reena - do your parents force you to go to the mosque

Kashif - its my decision to go to the mosque, well they tell me to, most of the time, but at the Islamic centre you see posters and banners and everything at the mosque its subdued

My mo was freaking out about Mecca I've been to Mecca-only Muslims are allowed in there - when I was there I became religious for a small while[...] and my mother became very angry when she heard that people of other religions, Americans were in Saudi Arabia [...] if something happens there - the hatred is brewing underneath for people for all muslims, thats where islam originated, their hatred for what is happening is growing no one can go there - there's a choice not to go there but if they go there, there might be a backlash I'm not sure, it's crazy the place is really nice, it's isolated from western views, its full of marble, its totally Islamic, totally constructed in marble, it's gigantic, when you go there you feel the power of the religion, 10,000

people going round, I would feel angry if there were any bombings or something along those lines there but my mother she'd be slightly more than angry, there would be protests in England against that there

[..] its hard to hold onto your religion in the way that parents want but I try to keep an open mind but like my mo and father would say, 'follow these lines, don't stray from the path, keep to your religion', but I wanna see everything and do everything so it's hard, it's hard for most people in Southall to keep their religion

[..] it used to worry me but now in myself I believe I'm an atheist but I wanna make up my own mind. In front of my father I say I'm a pure muslim, I have to, if I don't there will be resentment against me, like he could not accept that his son is an atheist

[...] I havent been to the mosque for 3 weeks cos my dad has been away but today he's coming back so I'll have to go just to show a good example to his friends [...] I go to the mosque but if it were my decision I'd rather pray at home

[..] all religions are the same they're based on the fear of death all of them have this, that after you die you'll go somewhere else, we are all afraid of death so you've got something else, then there's the social order or whatever to keep the society together but then different religions bring conflict but we're in two societies at the same time [...] it's hard [...] its difficult to say, er, one is Islamic society, but not to the true extent, and the other is sort of westernised society but bearing away from it, but if you look at the small things, people's views are entirely different [...] like behaviour and your role [...] your role as a son, as a religious person at home but not so much these days cos they see me growing up they see what I am becoming, whatever that is, and they wanted me to be like really religious but I think my mother's accepting the idea that I'm not, they might regret it but they might accept it

(Another boy, Chokkar, a Jat Sikh, enters the discussion)

[...]

Chokkar - the media coverage is really biased, it's taking a political side on what's going on in the Gulf is right

Reena - yeah, it's go get em boys

Chokkar - its exaggerated but that's how they sell newspapers the whole thing has been commercialised just so they can make money

Kashif - but isnt it for public morale as well to show that we're doing well in the gulf

Reena- but whos we?

Kashif- the allied forces

(Anopama and Herjinder, two Jat Sikh girls, enter the discussion)

Anopama- its just to put the public at ease, they have to

Herjinder- the Americans are saying, give us 10 minutes and we'll sort it out

Reena- but who is we?

Kashif- the public in western nations

Herjinder- we've said we'll sort Saddam Hussein out but if he sorts us out that's like, no go, the british losing

Chokkar - the media has pecolated throughout and reinforced these attitudes

Reena- then why do we bother watching the news and reading newspapers if we know that?

Kashif- well it's interpretation, you have to interpret it just like a poem in English

Chokkar- they filter the truth

Kashif- its the same in all high stress situations where there might be a public outlash the government always takes the same line - the government always takes over the media - they censor news

Chokkar- that's merely to protect people look at the Vietnam war they learned from that

Anopama- if they learned from that they wouldn't be at war now

Chokkar- you should know you do history the public freaked out they knew the Americans were losing

Reena - but we as the public have a right to know

Kashif- don't you think there's a higher right for social order there'd be chaos if they thought that Saddam Hussein was winning

Reena - but were being brainwashed here

Chokkar -were brainwashed yeah everything that boys and girls do, yeah, from the clothes they wear the music we listen to it's the same thing the magazines we read, 'these clothes are good for girls ..' its throughout the system

Herjinder- yeah cos since weve been little were bogwashed into thinking that whatever America does is right

Kashif - isnt the first priority social order

Chokkar - no it's economic basically

Reena - economics isn't the most important factor, it's life

Chokkar - how can you put life before the economy? look at the Russian economy, people are starving because of their economy, there is no life without a healthy economy

Anopama - no-one bothers about Lithuania

Chokkar - America invaded Grenada for exactly the same reason

Herjinder - no-one will do anything against America it's the most powerful country in the world and Russia is the second, we're no where

Reena- who's we?

Herjinder - I mean Britain's nothing compared with America

Reena - Are we more British or more Indian?

Chokkar - it depends on the issues if it was to do with religion I might be more toward the Indian side, I would with regard to the family as well cos Asian families are more united closer together, those are the things I agree on but in school I'm more british but when I go home I'm a different person I bet you lot are like that as well

Kashif - like here when I say we I mean the allies when I go home I say them

Anopama - but it doesn't only affect Muslims it affects the whole Asian community, didn't you hear on Sunrise that in Chicago the sikhs were attacked, Sikhs were attacked! Sikhs were threatenend because people thought they were Iraquis, we're all pakis as far as some people are concerned

Chokkar- are we?

Anopama - we used to own a shop and on the wall they'd write 'Pakis'

Herjinder - we lead really sheltered lives cos were here in Southall we haven't experienced life as it is we haven't been anywhere or done anything, we don't know what it's like to live up north

Anopama - the worst thing is our parent's attitudes as well cos my parents support what the Americans are doing but they also complain about racism -the Americans think we're inferior in the Middle East, if you go down to the basics are we inferior?

Herjinder - do you say were all the same?

Chokkar - you can say it comes from TV and films

Anopama - doesn't this Iraqi war seem like a race war

yeah

Anopama- it's like two different races fighting against each other but America just doesn't want to admit it they cover it up

Reena - what happens if there is a backlash here?

Anopama- if the war started here where would we fit in ? we call ourselves British

Reena - no one cares if we're British or about our ethnic origins we're all coloured

Herjinder - we're not British and we're not Indian
but if you went to live in India you wouldn't fit in there

Anopama - we can't fit in, we can't, if I'm here I'm a Pakistani, if I'm there I'm a Gori in my jeans innit?

Herjinder - we can't think their way, there are a lot of differences between east and west

Anopama - we can take the best of both worlds but the problem is, where do we fit in? if India and England had a rift where would we fit in?

Reena - we think west laws here and when we go home they inflict east laws on us

Anopama - when Saddam calls for a holy war where does that leave us Sikhs and Hindus

Herjinder -if you don't do nothing people will just think you're on his side

Anopama - Iran and Iraq might hate eachother but they've got one hate more America

Reena - ah but who created the monster Saddam Hussein who supplied the weapons?

Chokkar- The USA are now giving aid to Russia so they're together in UN now

Kashif - But before Russia supplying arms to Iraq

Reena- this war is never going to end when Iraqi children grow up without their fathers and they ask their mothers, 'where's dad?' and she says, 'he was killed by Americans', what kind of hatred will that breed in their hearts? it will never end

Anopama - they wont say its the Iraqis fault they'll just blame it on Saddam Hussein

Herjinder - he'll be a national hero

Reena - hang on youre thinking British again this is the Middle East

(The Bell to announce the end of the lunch hour breaks the discussion)

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SEKHON'S FAMILY TRAGEDY HIGHLIGHTS RACIAL TENSION



© Wife of Kuldip Sekhon

THOUSANDS OF mourners are expected to march through Southall on Wednesday, the day of murdered mini-cab driver Kuldip Singh Sekhon's funeral.

© Rallying round Mrs Sekhon and her daughter

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Locals show their respect

Fellow cabbies are planning a 24 hour strike, local shops are to close, and hundreds of students are expected to walk out of their schools to join the massive funeral procession through the streets of Southall.

The death of Mr Sekhon, 35, found with 54 stab wounds in his body, has shocked and shaken the local community and representatives from many groups have rallied round to support Mrs Sekhon and her five daughters.

The tragedy has become the focal point of many grievances about racial harassment and violence, both locally and nationally.

By CAROLINE JONES

Speaking at a press conference on Wednesday, Syd Bidwell, MP for Southall, who was himself a victim of racial attack when fascist activists smashed all the windows of his home in 1968, said: "Mr Sekhon's relatives were badly treated when their passage to Britain from the Punjab was stalled by the Foreign

Office because of conflicting accounts of the number of livestock at home.

"Thanks to my knowing just who to call, Mr Sekhon's brother, niece and nephew have now been allowed to come for the funeral."

Chairman of the Sekhon Family Support Group Surash Grover spoke of the lack of public

● Turn to page three

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A SECRET report has vindicated the claims of local council tenants that their housing conditions are "intolerable".

Residents of the High Lane Estate in Hanway Road, Hemwell, have long been lamenting the dog mess and refuse littering their doorsteps, stairs and corridors.

An internal docu-

See inside

Train for a support role

THE LOCAL Victim Support.

Scheme is calling for volunteers. The charity group, based in Perivale, works on the principle of crisis intervention. People affected by all crimes, from murder and rape to burglary and criminal damage, are offered help immediately.

Most of the victims seen are referred by the police and the Victim Support volunteers will be the first to visit after the police.

Volunteers may visit a victim again up to three more times, before referring them to another body, such as Social Services.

The next volunteer training scheme begins on February 3, and the Greenford, Northolt and Perivale Support Group badly needs more helpers.

The programme involves one day and four evenings, and covers counselling, effects of crime, the role of the police, legal and court procedures, and crime prevention.

The Princess Royal, who is patron of Victim Support, has commented on her own personal experience of crime: "Crime touches all of us at some time or another."

Co-ordinator of the local group Gills Heagerty will happily deal with any queries about the training scheme on 01-991 5363.

Family tragedy

From page one

Support from the council. He said: "While Hounslow Council leader Dave Wiesel has backed us, Ealing Council, for all their anti-racist jargon, would rather alienate the black community than the white in the face of the upcoming elections. They should never be forgiven."

The group are angry over the Crown Prosecution Service handling of the case. Stephen Coker, 20 of Telford Road, Southall, was remanded in custody at Feltham Magistrates Court until February 2, when he will appear again along with Sarah Fyles, 21, of Redwood Estate, Cranford, who is charged with perverting the course of justice.

Mr Grover told the conference: "The CPS has been very insensitive to the tragic circumstances of the case. It hasn't got the papers ready yet to commit Mr Coker for trial. We don't want a whitewash in court."

Jayinder Sidhu, Chairman of the West London Cab Association, which was set up in the wake of the murder, spoke of their initiatives: "We aim to increase the protection of London cabbies by better liaison with the police and by introducing ID cards."

Also present at the meeting were student representatives Jasbinder Baddhan, 17, and Kurneet Mehta, 16, who described the regret they feel about the lack of public support for racial issues.

The school heads and the local authority have been unwilling to make a stand, they have refused permission to close local schools down on January 31 for Mr Sekhon's funeral.

When asked to respond to these allegations, Ealing Council leader John Cudmore told The Recorder: "We have the deepest sympathy for the Sekhon family."

Tragically a number of people are murdered in the borough and it would be inappropriate to shut

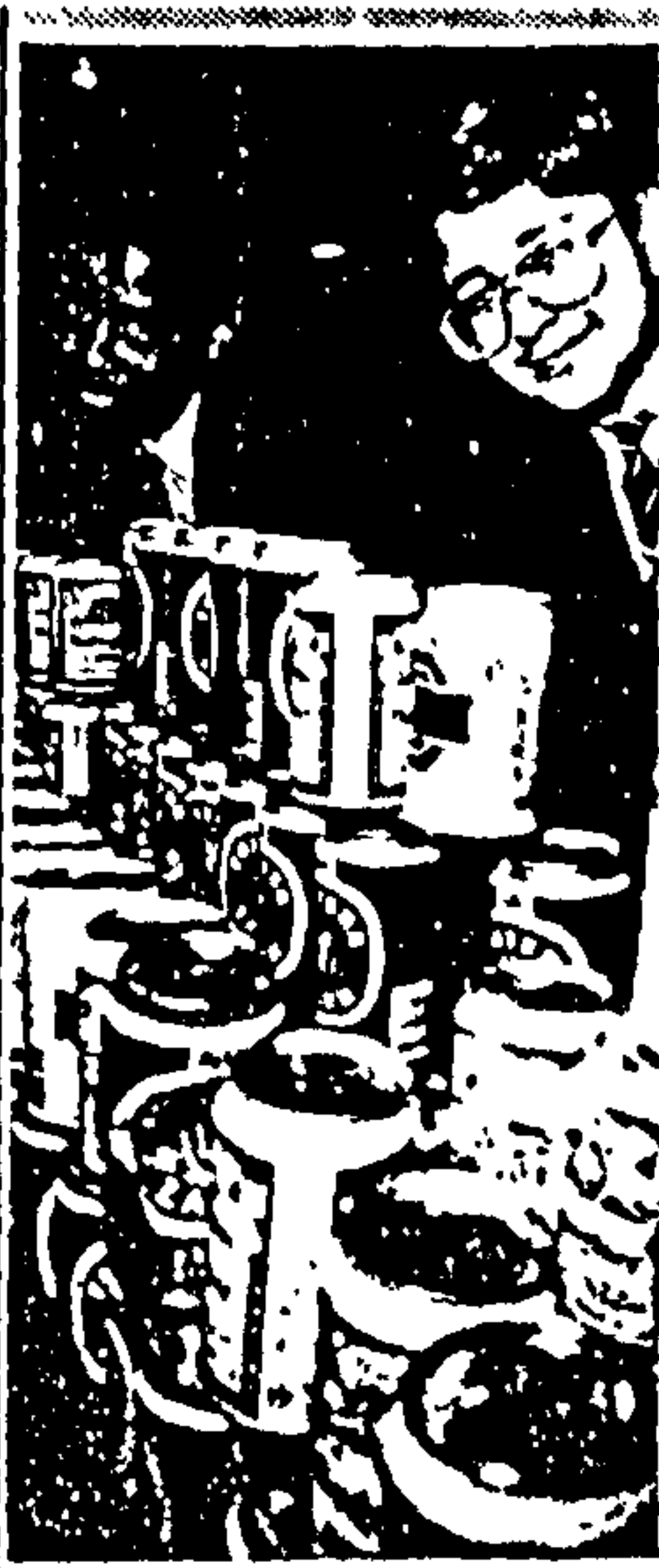
down our services for any one victim.

"Furthermore, Ealing Council has an obligation to provide services to those who depend on us day to day."

"However, we are sympathetic to employees who wish to attend the funeral and for those unable to attend, a room has been set aside for a minute's silence."

"The Director of Education Ulla Barlow has set up guidelines on how headteachers can respond sympathetically to requests from parents to allow pupils to attend the funeral."

Mr Sekhon will be in state at the Dominion Centre, The Green, Southall, from 12.45pm on January 31, before the funeral cortege makes its way at 1.45pm along Beaconsfield Road, West End Road and The Broadway, before winding up at the Fenner Broadway Centre in South Road. The procession will then go on to Hanworth Crematorium at 3.15pm.



Left, Saharid Hussain and Sanjay Saggat.

Collect-a-can

No, it is not the local Alcoholics Anonymous group, these are all cans collected by pub giant The Feathers, in Ealing, over Christmas.

Saharid Hussain and Sanjay Saggat, both 13, of Ealing Green High School, went down to the bar to pick up the sackful of empties.

Their school are collecting the tins for the Blue Peter Collect-a-can-to-save-a-life Appeal, which is raising money for special care baby units for the SSNAP (Society for the Sick newborn and their parents).

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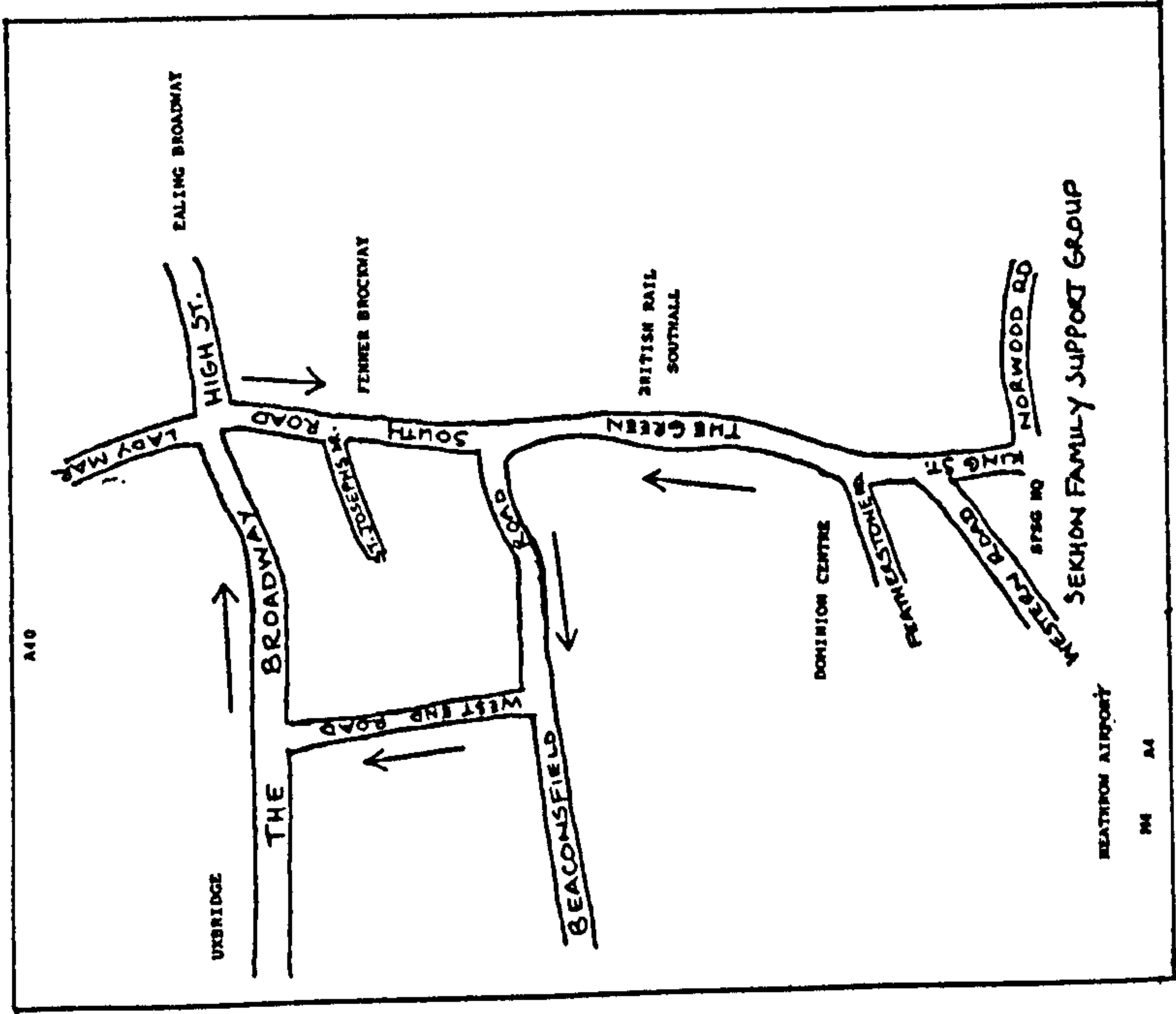
DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

31st JANUARY 1990

Tribute, Procession and Rally.

This day of remembrance called by the SEKHON FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP is meant to provide support to the Sekhon Family in their private tragedy but also to emphasise the public tragedy of racist violence and murders.

ROUTE OF PROCESSION



In the early hours of Saturday 11th November 1989, Kuldeep Singh Sekhon, a worker at Heatrow and a part-time cab driver, was murdered in the most brutal fashion. His alleged assailant, Steven Coker, was his last passenger that night in a taxi journey that took him from Telford Road, Golf Links, to the Redwood Estate Hounslow. Upon arrival, Kuldeep was set upon and stabbed fifty four times.

Racial violence is on the increase in Britain, for Sekhon and others this fact has come to late.

RACIAL MURDERS IN BRITAIN SINCE 1980

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Mohammed Asif Bradford

1984

Peter Burns Essex

1985

Shamira Kassam
Sahir Kassam
Rahir KassamEssex
Katbinder Hayre Kent

1986

Sudhir Patel
Ary Khan West Bromwich
Babur Chand
Ahmed Iqbal
Moha Nazir Wolverhampton

1987

Abdus Sattar Camden
Thomas Lee North London

1989

Ahmed Sheikh Edmburgh
Tahim Akhram Oldham
Mohammed Musa Saleh .. Sheffield
Kuldip Sekhon
Sumar ZahirCranford
Tasleem AkhtarBirmingham

The Sekhon Family Support Group maintain their call for a National Campaign against Racial Violence and Harrasment and also for an Independent Public Inquiry into the level and extent of Racial Violence In Ealing and Hounslow.

PROGRAMME.

12.00-12.45 Main hall, Dominion Centre

Tribute to Kuldeep Singh Sekhon from friends co-workers, members of the Sekhon Family Support Group and the West London Mini Cab Association.

Kuldip's body will be carried into the Dominion Centre by six members of the Sekhon Family Support Group which will include two members of the West London Mini Cab Association.

12.45-1.30 Main Hall, Dominion Centre

BODY LYING IN STATE.

Individuals, groups and organisations are requested to pay their final requests to Kuldeep by filing past his coffin.

1.30

PROCESSION.

To begin from Dominion Road, the head of the march will consist of:

- (i) Flag Bearers
- (ii) Hearse
- (iii) Family members
- (iv) West London Mini Cab Association
- (v) Sekhon Family Support Group
- (vi) Others

2.45 The Broadway, Southall

One minute silence as the march reaches the junction with South Road.

Immediately afterwards family members and friends will leave the march and make their way to the crematorium.

The procession will continue to the Fenner Brockway Centre.

3.30

Rally

4.30

Singh Sabha Gurdwara, Havelock Road,Southall

Food will be served

SOUTHALL'S KULDIP TRIBUTE

The streets of Southall were taken over last Wednesday by some 3000 people paying a moving tribute to Kuldip Singh Sekhon, a part-time mini-cab driver, who was brutally murdered on November 11, 1989.

Dignified in expressing both grief and anger, the Southall com-

munity supported the call of the Sekhon Family Support Group for a national campaign against racial violence.

Unity

In a fine display of unity all banks, shops and offices were closed.

Supporters came from Scotland, Birmingham and Leeds to pay their respects.

Family, friends and the wider community are convinced Mr Sekhon was one of us people racially murdered last year. A rally harked calls for an independent public in-

Continued on back page

Chinese New Year Resolution

The advent of the Year of the Horse gave Liverpool Chinese actor David Yip, formerly famous as the 'Chinese Detective' and now playing in Channel Four's 'Brookside', the opportunity to make another New Year's Resolution.

Taking part in the

Spring Festival celebrations in London's Gerrard Street with a group of companions and friends, he launched a campaign to encourage people to pick up smoking.

"If they failed on January 1, he has me and it's this New Year", he said.

See centre spread

Labour launches 'London Pride'

The Labour Party leader, Neil Kinnock, last week launched a new campaign which, whilst avoiding direct reference to the now abolished Greater London Council (GLC), promises that a future Labour government would establish a new, lean and tightly managed democratically-elected authority to govern London.

Launching the campaign, titled 'London Pride', as part of a build-up to local elections in May, Kinnock claimed that a decade of Thatcherism had left the "extraordinary impression of a national government that somehow wants to punish its own capital city".

He claimed that the



Labour leader Neil Kinnock

Tory government was willing to see London choke itself into paralysis as the rising salaries and office blocks of the City stand in stark contrast to prevailing squalor and congestion.

(Continued on page 2)



Wife, daughters, mother and family members of Kuldip Singh Sekhon, together with other members of the community, gather to pay their last respects to him lying-in-state at Southall's Dominion Centre

Photo: Humphrey Newman

THE DAY SOUTHALL CLOSED

By Paul K Coleman
Southall shutdown one of Mrs Thatcher's favourite British crowd scenes, the High Street money-go-round, to draw attention to a British tragedy: the 'turn-a-blind eye' approach to racial violence.

Kuldip Singh Sekhon's murder last December deprives his five beautiful yet bewildered daughters of the life-time experience of having a Dad.

Southall's Asian community was determined to draw the greatest attention to Kuldip's brutal and tragic death as well as to console the Sekhon family.

Sweet centres and sari shops shut-down. Kanda Jewellers pulled down its shutters. The Suman Marriage Bureau ceased match-making. So much for the myth that the Asian trader sees life only as an open-all-hours shop.

Even Barclay's Bank closed to show respect. Leeds Building Society clerks stopped chasing overdue mortgage repayments.

It was this for it was Kuldip's need for extra cash that drove him to drive a mini-cab. A part-time supplement to his day-job as a caterer for SAS Caterers at Heathrow.

Encounter

A second job, but late-night street-work that led to the encounter with his killer. Of course, the community are united in the belief that Kuldip's murder was racially motivated.

The Sekhon Family Support Group claim Kuldip was one of six black people killed last year by racially motivated attackers. Their call for a national campaign against the imminent tragedy of racial violence was chanted loudly by last week's marchers.

But Downing Street, the media and the Nation seem to look away or pretend not to hear



Southall's shops closed from midday as a mark of respect

During Thatcher's decade Britain was the civilised nation that witnessed (or turned a blind eye) to 30 murders attributed to racism.

But there is no official recognition of this tragedy at all from the government, Parliament, the police.

No flying visit from Mrs Thatcher to the victim's family home. No message of condolences from Buckingham Palace.

No talk of "learning the lessons" from the tragedy. None of the talk that followed Hillsborough, Heyssel, Bradford fire, Herald of Free Enterprise, Clapham, King's Cross.

No public enquiry into the tragic loss of life and ensuing grief of black families de-

vestated by racial violence.

No recommendations to breathe life into the hope 'it never happens again'. No reports from a public enquiry. Not even a report to leave on a shelf.

The community is left to pick up the pieces. The Sekhon Family Support Group and the London Mini-Cab Drivers Association (LMCA) collected money for the family in their buckets.

Appeal

Schoolchildren raised money. Local radio launched an appeal. But one death, one murder does not make a national disaster. Fifty-four stab wounds is horrific but 30 racial murders in ten years seems to fail to make the disaster

grade.

A white woman on the 207 bus into Southall told the bus driver that Kuldip's murder was "horrific and awful". The bus driver, who no doubt could have told her a few hairy stories, listened as she went on about this "cruel, crazy world".

So as they get older in this cruel and crazy world how are Jasbaram, aged 10, Karamjit, 7, Sukhbir, 7, and five-year-old twins Harpreet and Rajvinder to make any sense out of their father's death?

Reconstruct Kuldip Sekhon's world, indeed the worlds of many Asian shift-workers, mini-cab drivers, bus crews, railway workers, cleaners and waiters. The reconstruction will



Mourners came from as far afield as Scotland

Photo: Humphrey Tom



Thousands of mourners stood in silent tribute

show greater vulnerability to physical racial assault.

Lower paid, longer hours, less safety, less prospects, more discrimination, more exploitation, more isolation and in many of these jobs, virtually no protection.

Jaswinder Singh Sidhu's LMCA knows that to secure greater protection and job security for mini-cab drivers will be difficult. Mini-cab drivers are reckoned to carry a lot of money.

Asian mini-cab drivers, supplementing their day-jobs like Kuldip, work the longest, most isolated hours and are prone to the

racist thugs who force Asian women and children to stay indoors at night.

Mini-cab drivers are not the only ones. Look at last year's murder of two Tamil asylum-seekers, who for want of work permits, worked as amusement arcade guards in Soho. The leisure industry knows how to exploit but not to protect its workers. Both were night security guards.

In July 1987 restaurant worker Abdus Satter was robbed to death by skinhead Anthony Carroll as he walked home along a Hampstead street at 11.30pm.

Peter Burns, a British Rail ticket collector, died after a metal stake was thrust into his eye. He was working alone, late at night. No security, no protection.

Feeling

The feeling from Southall last week emerged that it is futile for the Asian community, especially for Asian workers, to expect protection from their employers or the police.

Hanif Akhtar, whose niece Tasleem was brutally murdered in Birmingham last December, stated the community must take greater steps to protect

itself. Mrs Sekhon invited her husband's fully displayed in Britain what has no resemblance to handsome picture Kuldip Sekhon around Southall.

Wider British society might yet again failed to learn anything. Just like it failed to learn from Southall's resistance to National Front 1979.

But the Asian community knows the way forward is to take the lesson from Southall.



Self defence and unity were two key themes of the day



The Tasleem Akhtar Memorial Committee, mourning the victim of a racist killing in Birmingham, supported the march



Increasingly organized, minicab drivers supported the demonstration

**SEKHON FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP
AND
BLAIR PEACH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE**

**INVITE YOU TO AN EVENING OF
CULTURE AND RESISTANCE**

SATURDAY MAY 12th

6.00 — 11.30 pm

DOMINION CENTRE SOUTHALL

TICKETS £3/£1.50 CONS

REFRESHMENTS + Creche

PROCEEDS TO SEKHON FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

**REMEMBER
KULDIP SINGH SEKHON**

MURDERED BY RACISTS 1989

REMEMBER BLAIR PEACH

MURDERED BY POLICE 1979

**CONTACT
SFSG
FOR
FURTHER
DETAILS
843 2333**



**AUBREY BRYAN'S
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PHILHARMONIC**

JINI KELMAN

JACKIE KAY

HANIF KURESHI

**JEAN "BINTA"
BREEZE**



SAGI FAROOQI

ANNE WOOD

MAHMOOD JAMAL

TARA ARTS

JEAN GITTINS

**MOGNISS
ABDALLAH**

GUS JOHN



TOM LEONARD

IAN MACDONALD QC

GARETH PIERCE

RANDHIR S. SANDHU

REMEMBER KULDIP SINGH SEKHON

On January 31st 1990 Southall closed down to pay tribute to Kuldip Singh Sekhon, a part time cab driver and worker at Heathrow, who was stabbed 54 times on the Redwood Estate, Hounslow in a savage and senseless racial killing.

The day saw over 3000 people take to the streets, students stage a walk out of schools and colleges over Ealing, the formation of the West London Mini Cab Association and the first twenty four hour mini cab strike in the history of Southall. Shops, businesses, banks and jewellers also closed on this day.

These events initiated by the Sekhon Family Support Group, an organisation set up soon after Kuldip's murder, triggered a memory for the people of Southall of the increasing spiral of racial attacks and murders from Abdul Malik in 1974, Gurdip Singh Chagger in 1976 and Blair Peach in 1979.

The national character of the protest, leading to the formation of Sekhon Family Support Groups in Glasgow and Edinburgh, placed that memory in a nationwide context. The success of that day emphasised the long history of resistance by Black people against all vestiges of oppression, be they state sanctioned or state initiated. More importantly, though, the Day of Remembrance showed the potential for a National Campaign against Racial Violence and Murders, a task that the Sekhon Family Support Group has committed itself to.

The Evening of Culture and Resistance on Saturday May 12th 1990 is part of that campaign. Black artists and activists will unite to renew our memory of Malik, Chagger, Peach and many others; to mourn Sekhon, to renew and rededicate our commitment to fighting racism and to promote the current Sekhon campaign.

Stephen Coker, Kuldip's alleged assailant, faces trial at the Old Bailey on 16th July 1990. This was the venue where justice was so little in evidence when the Guildford Four and the Birmingham Six faced trial. It also meted out the most vicious life sentences to Winston Sillcot, Mark Braithwaite and Engin Ragphin after the Broadwater Farm Uprisings of 1985. In order for justice to the black community to be rendered in full, a national mobilization is called for on this day by the Sekhon Family Support Group.

Communities of Resistance Challenge Fortress Europe

A REPORT FROM SOUTHALL

On November 11, 1989, Kuldip Singh Sekhon, a part-time mini cab driver, was set upon and stabbed 54 times. He is the latest victim of racial murder in Southall, West London. At his funeral on January 31, 1990, designated as a *Day of Remembrance* for all victims of racial murders, the town of Southall came to a standstill. All shops closed, students and teachers walked out of schools, and minicab drivers went on a 24 hour strike.



The Sekhon campaign is the first one to have tested the Black community in the struggle against racism in the 1990s. The manner of his killing, 54 stab wounds - 44 to his head - makes it clear that racial hatred is far from extinct. In fact it may even be ripe for the kind of revival which could usher in racial violence on a scale similar to that which we experienced in the 'Paki-bashing' era of the early 1970s.

During that period state racism, and racist sections of the white community, allied powerfully to set in motion a train of violence. The years which preceded the killing of Gurdip Singh Chagger, in 1976, had seen a huge growth in racial violence against Black people. Immigration control was high on the national agenda. Enoch Powell's 'rivers of blood' speech set the violent mood of the early 70s British racism, a racism which became a dominant part of British national politics at the time. This had huge repercussions in Southall, an area where the Asian community were settling. They were presented with huge struggles in every area of their lives including housing, employment and education, and especially pressing was the issue of dealing with racial violence on the streets. One of the failures of the so-called community leaders of the day was the decision not to confront this issue directly, but to allay white fears instead. This was fatal. It left Black people totally exposed to racial violence on the streets. It became a national sport to beat up 'Pakis', as all Asian people were called. 1971 to 1976 was the 'Paki-bashing' era. Gurdip Chagger was a victim of this situation. His killing occurred just after *The Sun* and *The Mirror* carried sensational stories about Malawi Asians jumping the housing queue, and being housed in a four-star hotel.

Gurdip Chagger's murder destroyed the myth of racial harmony, whereas Kuldip Sekhon's murder has shown that (even after 13 years) Southall is (still) not free from racial violence. As we go into the 1990s, the killing of Kuldip Sekhon, and the passion with which the community has responded, reflects without doubt their collective memory, and their

consciousness of the dangers which racial violence poses to their daily lives.

1979 - Kuldip Sekhon Arrives in Britain

Kuldip Sekhon arrived in Britain in 1979, the same year Margaret Thatcher was elected prime minister, and the year in which Blair Peach was murdered by the Special Patrol Group in Southall. Many members of Southall's community believe that this particular twist in history sealed Kuldip Sekhon's fate. What is true, in fact, is that the social forces that were so significantly present during Sekhon's murder in 1989, already existed in 1979, and were becoming deeply entrenched and inflamed in the last decade. The alleged murderer, Steven Coker, was only ten years old in 1979. Margaret Thatcher's remarks about British culture being swamped by an alien one, coupled with the pro-active street militancy of overtly racist and fascist parties such as the National Front and the British National Party, had a greater impact on his social consciousness than all the anti-racist postures of the 1970s.



above: Sekhon family
below: March through Southall, on January 31, the day of Kuldip Sekhon's funeral



Southall - A Community Goes On Strike

The Sekhon Family Support Group (SFSG), was formally established after a public meeting held in Southall on December 10, 1989. Malkit Sekhon, wife of the murdered Kuldip Sekhon, said:

In our moment of grief, I have bathed in the strength of people coming together, I'll never be alone. I am a part of the Support Group because it feels the same pain as I do, and because together we can do something about discrimination.

The task of the Support Group is to provide comfort and support to the Sekhon Family, and also to challenge the disinformation surrounding the murder. At the end of the meeting, the community was in no doubt that the murder was racially motivated. The campaign was set in motion. It called for an Independent Inquiry into racial violence in Ealing and Hounslow, and began to organise the funeral as a day of remembrance for all victims of racial murders.

The build up to the funeral, and the day itself, saw an unprecedented level of mobilisation in Southall. Minicab drivers became key participants in the campaign. They formed an association, and sent daily delegations to shops to request closure. At the funeral they provided over 50 highly organised stewards for the demonstration. It was always evident as the campaign grew, that new alliances, links and relationships were being

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forged amidst the grief, anger, and renewed energy and commitment that people felt in response to the killing.

Existing links with high school students and teachers in Southall, prior to the formation of the campaign, meant that there was a possibility of students actively participating. When they decided to join the campaign, they encountered huge obstacles from the school and the education authorities. To overcome these problems, they started debating societies where the Sekhon murder and racism were discussed. Despite the upsurge of the youth in 1976, young people, including students, are given very little opportunity to participate in decision-making processes in various areas of their lives. The need to respond to a new, broader based, and therefore more virulent strain of racism, as Britain goes into Europe, is likely to make more demands on their energies than anything else. As one sixth form student said:

It is hard to believe our efforts amounted to just one day, but its revelations were numerous. It had shown us the extremes of racism. The power, and the lack of power we students possessed. It showed those who cared, and those who choose to turn a blind eye at school, but most importantly, it showed what could be done to intensify the struggle against racism.

However, the struggle of the students to mobilise around the Sekhon murder, demonstrates some of the weaknesses of their position. The danger they face, is the lack of a historical political perspective, due to the failures of the political leadership in the community (including the post 1976 youth movements), and the barren Thatcher years. The Sekhon campaign awoke their energies and consciousness, and gave them an opportunity to act.

The role of women in the campaign has been extremely important. Malkit Sekhon has been a central figure. She has overcome her grief by participating actively. No decision can be taken without her. Her five young daughters are familiar figures at regular meetings of the Sekhon Family Support Group. They are Jaskaran, Karamjit, Sukhbir, Harpeet and Rajbinder. Traditionally, their situation as a female family surviving their dead husband and father is viewed as a tragedy, because Kuldip Sekhon left no sons to survive him. Malkit Sekhon has expressed strong views about this. She is conscious that her identity as a woman extends beyond that of a widow, and has stated time and again that her memory of her husband is more than that of him as a victim. To keep alive his memory, she has joined the fight against racism. She confesses that prior to his killing, she might have viewed racial murders with less awareness that any Black



H. NEWMAN

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person could become a victim. She frequently states that her reason for participating in the campaign, is to fight to prevent racial murders happening to anyone.

A large number of women are involved in the campaign. 90% of the students involved in the Sekhon campaign are girls. The campaign benefits from their presence. They represent an emergent generation who bring a fresh perspective to grass roots organising in this period. They have emerged out of the following historical backdrop. Traditional patriarchal structures have depended, to a large degree, on the Asian community's need to maintain an independent economic life of its own to survive. For example, the food and clothing industries within the Asian community, are heavily dependent on a workforce of family labour drawn from wives, girls and young boys. The general economic crisis has affected this situation markedly. The lessening of labour costs, and the cheapness of goods have diminished the labour market, and wives are now forced to work outside of the family structure. Girls and boys who were born in this country are no longer prepared to work in almost slave-labour conditions within their own communities. This will alter economic, social, and cultural relations in such a way that it will foster new forms of independence for young girls and boys.



D. HOFFMAN

'It is hard to believe our efforts amounted to just one day, but its revelations were numerous. It had shown us the extremes of racism. The power, and the lack of power we students possessed'



'In our moment of grief, I have bathed in the strength of people coming together, I'll never be alone. I am a part of the Support Group because it feels the same pain as I do, and because together we can do something about discrimination'

Shopkeepers who decided to close for the funeral mobilised other shopkeepers. They lobbied their own trade associations. All the banks closed, including Barclays and Lloyds, as well as the jewellers, normally the most ardent members of the business community. The Bookmakers also closed. The significance of the traders' decision to cease trading cannot be overstated. They closed the shops as a protest against racial violence, against the murder, and out of respect for the family. This is also the first time that the business community as a whole have entered into an overtly contentious political arena. The fact that they made their decision to close without any pressure from community leaders, makes their action even more remarkable. The truth is that the 'community leadership' no longer see grass roots organising within the community as central to their politics. They see the Labour Party as a pivotal force, and their involvement in it has bureaucratised their traditional activism. This leaves a gap in the community which has freed its political energies, and it was this energy and independence which emerged with the Sekhon Campaign on the day of the funeral.

Challenging Fortress Europe

The murder, Southall's response to it, and events which are occurring in the political climate of Britain today, need to be viewed

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People from the 'Third World', living in an EC country, now need six copies of their current visa, eight copies of their current passport, numerous references, and need to wait for four months to get permission to enter France for a short visit



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much more widely against the backdrop of European political scenarios. There are 16 million immigrants, migrants and refugees from the so-called Third World living in 12 EC countries. Margaret Thatcher expressed the attitude of many European politicians when she complained that the abolition of Europe's internal frontiers would lead to 'drug traffickers, terrorists, and illegal immigrants'. Ministers, civil servants, and senior police officers have been meeting regularly to work out agreements to control non-European residents.

The TREVI Agreement and SCHENGEN Accords are not accountable to European or national parliaments. They provide common policies of visa controls, increased information between immigration and police forces, expulsion of 'undesirables', and rejecting asylum seekers.

The Schengen Accord, covering Germany, France, Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg, was seen as a model for proposed EC regulations to cover all the 12 countries, and was meant to come into effect from January 1, 1990. But the recent developments in Eastern Europe, and some determined resistance from migrant and refugee groups, delayed its implementation. It affects not just new arrivals, but also those settled in Europe for many years. People from the 'Third World', living in an EC country, for example, now need six copies of their current visa, eight copies of their current passport, numerous references, and need to wait for four months to get permission to enter France for a short visit.

Due to heavy criticism from other EC countries, Italy has promised to tighten its immigration controls. Italy has 1.3 million unauthorised workers, mainly North Africans. To seem liberal, the government offered them general amnesty, to be claimed by April 30. This measure provided the occasion for a spate of racist attacks, virtually unprecedented in Italy, which was probably inspired by the anti Arab racism sweeping through neighbouring France and other European countries. The racism of immigration controls is always easily translated into racial violence on the streets. In March, six North Africans were seriously injured in two weeks of separate racist attacks in Florence.

There is a common link between the following events: German and Dutch police attending last year's Notting Hill Carnival; the sacking of all Filipino staff at a London Hotel and replacing them with Italian workers; the tightening of immigration controls, and the increase in racist violence across Europe. For those belonging to the European Community, 1992 may represent greater freedom of movement, but for those who don't, it becomes a fortress Europe, representing less freedom, more racism, and more controls.

It is clear that the changes which Black people and their environments have been



Celia Stubbs, Blair Peach's common-law widow, lays a wreath at the spot where Blair Peach was killed by police on April 23, 1979



Demonstrators commemorate the anniversary of Blair Peach's death

experiencing in the last decade are approaching a crisis. If racism on a European-wide scale is going to be the testing ground for us in the 1990s, we have to review urgently the political changes which have occurred in the last decade, prepare to link up with communities in Europe, and set a new, broader agenda for fighting European racism as a whole.

On July 16, Steven Coker will stand trial for the murder of Kuldip Sekhon at the Old Bailey. The Sekhon Family Support Group is organising a mass picket outside the Old Bailey to demand justice for Kuldip Sekhon. This demonstration is an important step for the campaign, a campaign which aims to set up a national and European-wide movement against racial murders and violence in the 1990s.

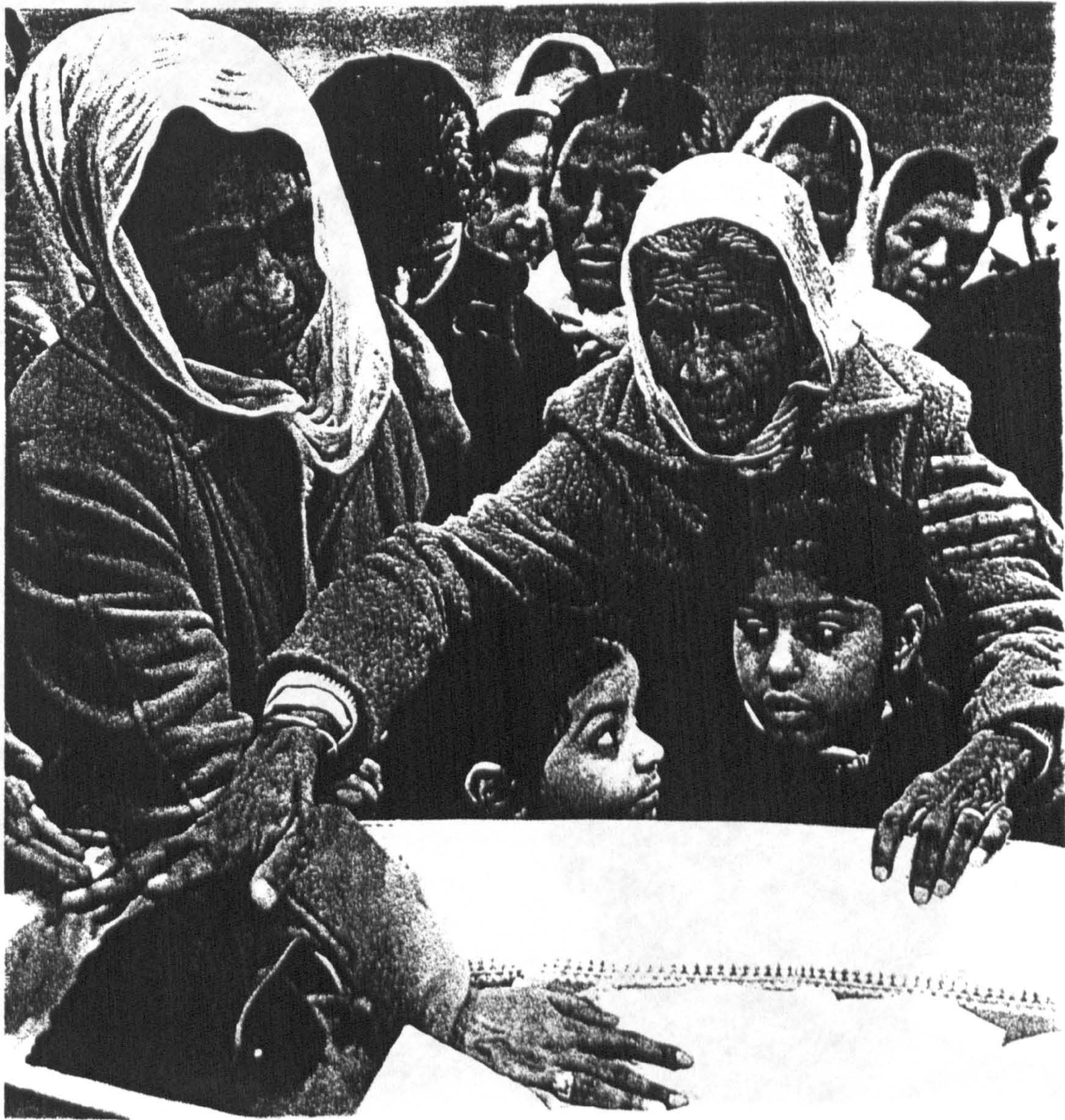
SEKHON FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

This article was researched by Jan Shinebourne, Balvinder Gill and Suresh Grover, with help from the Southall Monitoring Group and the Refugee Forum.

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A QUESTION OF COLOUR

In July, a young white man was jailed for life for the murder of an Indian minicab driver. But the question that still concerns the community where the victim lived is whether he was murdered in a robbery that went wrong or killed because of his colour. By GRAHAM COSTER. Photographs by JOHN STURROCK



Below right: Steven Coker, now in prison for the murder of minicab driver Kuldip Sekhon

Below: Kuldip Sekhon's mother (left), his wife and three of his daughters at his funeral in Southall last January. The dark glasses and turban hide multiple stab-wounds



A couple returning from the theatre in the early hours of a winter morning found the minicab driver's body in the road. His grey Cortina stood empty alongside with its headlights on. The man lay dead, bleeding from dozens of stab wounds.

Two days later the police picked up his assailant, who admitted to drinking and drug-taking on the night of the killing. At the end of July this year he was sentenced to life imprisonment at the Old Bailey. An all-too-common assault, in this case running frenziedly out of control, on someone pursuing one of the most vulnerable occupations of all – working alone, late at night, necessarily with money on him, picking up people the worse for wear when the pubs close. It was a straightforward investigation, a satisfactory conviction for the Metropolitan Police. But in this case both attacker and victim came from one of west London's most singular communities: the largely Asian town of Southall. The minicab driver was Indian, his murderer white. Several weeks after the man's death, people began to claim that Southall had seen another racial murder.

Kuldip Sekhon had been planning to make this his last night of minicab driving. He had been doing it for only 11 weeks, to supplement the £150 or so a week he earned for washing in-flight meal trays at Heathrow. Although it brought in some more money to look after his family of five daughters under ten, it was giving him a bad back. On Friday 10 November 1989 he would have followed the usual pattern: a shift at the airport caterers until ten at

night, then four or five hours driving the minicab into the early hours. What turned out to be his last fare was a pick-up from the Golf Links Estate on the outskirts of Southall, to go the three miles to the Redwood Estate in Cranford. Although the minicab controller remembers a request to collect two people, only one was waiting by the phone kiosk when the minicab arrived. Soon after one in the morning an eyewitness living on the Redwood Estate remembers waking out of a nightmare. Outside, a car horn was sounding. Strains of conversation came up; the voices rose into shouting. Hearing "a chanting, a scream of aggression, in an Asian dialect", he looked out of his bedroom window to see two men fighting in the road. It was a one-sided fight, with a man in a white jacket on top, kicking and punching. Eventually, hands raised above his head, white-jacket made a lunging movement with them many times. Leaving the other person in the road, he returned to the car to retrieve a bag, and walked away. (At this point the eyewitness appears to have gone back to bed.) There were 58 stab wounds in Sekhon's body.

For Sekhon's funeral in January this year 3,000 people joined one of the biggest processions seen in Southall. Shops, businesses, all closed for half a day. Local school children were allowed time off to attend. All minicab firms in the area stopped work for 24 hours.

Southall is now the largest Asian community in London – some 30,000 live there, out of 100,000 Asians in the whole



Old Bailey

of west London – and its steady growth since the late Fifties, when the first Punjabi men were recruited as cheap labour to work in the local rubber factory, has been marked by inevitable racial tensions. By 1964, as more Asian men were finding work locally – building London buses for AEC, making tyres for Firestone, doing many of the dirty, heavy jobs white workers were turning down – and bringing their families over from the subcontinent to settle, there was a “Keep Southall White” campaign in the town. The Labour Club had a colour bar; trade unions were split between the internationalists who wanted to welcome the “dark strangers”, as a contemporary political pamphlet well-meaningly described them, and the stubborn white working-class racists who wanted them out.

As the Asian community went on growing – the continuing expansion of Heathrow Airport brought enough new jobs to absorb the influx – so it spread further afield, radiating out from Southall itself like the rings of an onion. The first Asian families moved into hitherto white middle-class preserves like Greenford, Cranford, and Feltham. The local authority began busing Asian pupils all over the borough to prevent any school developing what was considered an undesirably high concentration of immigrant children.

In 1976 a Sikh schoolboy called Gurdip Chaggar was murdered. Seen symbolically as the first racial killing, it led to the foundation of the Southall Youth Movement – whose young, militant members for the first time broke with their parents’ quietist reluctance to cause trouble, and were prepared to defend their right to live safely in Southall. In 1979 the National Front – active around Acton, Ealing and Hammersmith – organised a public meeting in Southall on St George’s Day. The local population was permitted to counter-demonstrate, but on the day itself the local police commander was replaced by an officer from outside, who sent in the Special Patrol Group, and, in addition to more than a thousand arrests and countless serious injuries, a teacher, Blair Peach, was killed by a truncheon blow from an unidentified SPG officer. Then in 1981 a skinhead band appeared at the Hanborough Tavern on the edge of Southall – shipping in right-wing supporters from Liverpool Street for the occasion. After a skinhead had assaulted an Asian woman, the Southall Youth Movement stormed the pub, rammed it with a police coach, and burned the place down. It was an act which marked the transformation of Southall for good. Further opposition to the Asian presence was not only unacceptable, but now also untenable. It had

become an Asian town that could look after itself. Since then Southall has prospered peacefully: the town centre is busy and jammed with traffic, business is good. It was for this reason that discovering the motive for Kuldip Sekhon’s murder became so important. If it was perceived to have been a racial killing, tensions would rise all over again.

The police arrested 21-year-old Steven Coker for the killing of Kuldip Sekhon on the morning of Monday 13 November. Why had he killed the minicab driver? If the answers to a charge of racial murder are usually difficult, qualified, circumstantial, the questions are simple enough. Was Sekhon’s race at least an aggravating factor in his assault? Did his colour encourage his assailant to attack him? A positive racist motive in cases of harassment is frequently tricky to quantify. Other, incontrovertible motives, like robbery, for example, may appear to exclude it – when in reality it may actually compound them. A minor, run-of-the-mill offence such as “abusive behaviour”, punishable by a small fine, may consist of vicious racist insults. Perhaps the best definition, therefore, is a negative one: a racist attack is one which would not have happened in the same way, or even at all, had the victim not been from an ethnic minority. In the Southall case it translates baldly as: would Kuldip



Sekhon still be alive had he been white?

If someone alleges racial motivation in an attack, the police (according to their "Best Practice Guidelines") will start out by treating the incident as such. In other words, if the victim thinks it is, the police will too, until it is proven otherwise. But murder is an obvious anomaly, the victim being dead. "The logical extension, in that case," agrees Detective Superintendent Stewart Hull, who headed the Sekhon investigation, "is, what does the family think?" Here, in the first weeks following Sekhon's death, is where the controversy begins, and opinions start to differ.

When Superintendent Hull first visited Malgit Sekhon, Kuldip's widow, there was no discussion of the issue – no question, he says, of her thinking along such lines. But by December, the attacker long caught and committed for trial, Mrs Sekhon changed her mind. "I had never experienced any trouble before," she says. "I didn't even know what racial harassment was." She has lived in England for 11 years; Kuldip had arrived two years before her. "Before this I would have thought that nothing happens without a reason – that if a white person hits you, there must have been a reason. But I don't believe that now. Whatever Coker says for why he did it, he knows the reason was colour."

Mrs Sekhon came to her conclusion some time after she was visited by Suresh Grover, co-ordinator of the Southall Monitoring Group (SMG). The SMG was founded in 1979 soon after the St George's Day disturbances, initially by volunteers at the local law centre. "You needed an organisation here that was rooted in the community," says Grover, who came to Southall in 1975 from Bradford, "and that gave legal advice free to victims of racial harassment." The SMG now offers a 24-hour emergency helpline for people suffering racial attacks, and its free legal service covers anything from domestic violence to immigration, from racial harassment to relations with the police. The SMG's own relations with the police are a contentious subject, icy at best and frequently non-existent. A recent case in Feltham, involving the victimisation of two Asian brothers, who ran an off-licence, by the members of a social club across the road, marked an all-time low between the SMG and the local police, with the SMG alleging that the police were refusing to treat a violent campaign of harassment as racially motivated at all, and the local police's chief superintendent going on the record to condemn the SMG as "a pernicious organisation spewing out lies and



Above: Suresh Grover of the Southall Monitoring Group, a legal advice organisation, accompanies Sekhon's mother to Coker's trial

Left: Malgit Sekhon and her five daughters

propaganda in pursuance of their own ideological aims". Grover, a courteous, dispassionate man, puts his side. "Our position is very clear," he says. "If someone is racially harassed, and they want to get in touch with the police, fine - we will assist them. But we are accountable primarily to our clients, and we are not prepared to sacrifice the issue of racial harassment by chatting to people who are not willing to act effectively."

Grover visited Mrs Sekhon the weekend after the murder to offer his sympathy and support. At that time, he says, he and the SMG didn't know whether the murder was racially motivated or not. Subsequently, on 10 December, the SMG founded the Sekhon Family Support Group, to raise money for Mrs Sekhon and her young family, and to campaign publicly for the killing to be recognised as a racial attack. "People think we began shouting that it was racial immediately," says Grover. "But when something like this happens right on your doorstep like that, in your own community, you scrutinise it carefully. We waited for four weeks, until the family began to say it was racial. We didn't move at all until Mrs Sekhon was convinced."

What convinced Mrs Sekhon, however, was evidence that the SMG showed her. Checking back in their files, they found that the man the police had charged, Steven Coker, had been on their books for three years as a result of two separate Asian families' complaints to them. In one case, Mr G - like Coker a resident of the Golf Links Estate, where Sekhon's minicab had called that Friday night - had rung the SMG's emergency line in June 1986, alleging that he had received "a blow to the chest" from Coker when he'd gone round to his house to complain at the noise from a loud party. Further harassment eventually led to Mr G and his family being transferred from the estate. Another man, Mr C, was attacked in January 1988 while parking his car at Golf Links: one of his two white assailants he recognised as "Coco", a youth who lived in Telford Road on the estate. It was the same person who, with a group of youths, had attacked and abused members of his family three times the previous year. In November 1988 Coker was given a three-month suspended sentence at Isleworth Crown Court for his most recent assault on Mr C - whose family have also since received a transfer from the Golf Links Estate.

"When I originally heard that Golf Links was involved in the murder," says Grover, "I thought it might be racial - but obviously I didn't know." The golf course

itself is next door, but the image of green fairways and luxuriant rough conjured up by the name hardly sits with the concrete acres of flats and windy parking lots that have extended an estate of Thirties housing between Southall and Greenford. This is the impoverished outskirts of the community, and the big estate has a history of inter-racial tensions - between Afro-Caribbean and Asian as well as between white and Asian. Andrew Houseley of the Ealing Racial Equality Council (EREC) remembers how the old tenants' hall, now demolished, was a notorious drinking centre for local skinheads; the black boyfriend of a barmaid working there was hospitalised after being attacked with a lump of concrete. The EREC knew about Coker too: he was in and around what Houseley calls "a persistent hardcore gang" based on Golf Links - a skinhead gang with a background in drugs and glue-sniffing, frequently in trouble for smashing Asian shopkeepers' windows, as well as fights in pubs and assaults.

The SMG still has a number of clients on Golf Links - many are single Asian mothers with small children and a poor command of English. The plight of Mrs A, a current case, is typical: routine racial abuse and threats when she goes out - the culprits more often than not young kids of primary school age - but also groups of men with Alsations standing outside her flat, and lighted newspapers thrown through her upstairs window. Last year her six-year-old son's nose was fractured when a white youth hit him with a branch.

Events preceding Kuldip Sekhon's funeral did not encourage his family to have confidence in British sensitivity to racial issues. Kuldip's nephew and niece were initially refused permission to come over from India to represent Kuldip's brother, who is disabled and unable to travel. The British Consulate in Delhi suspected that they would stay on illegally if it issued them with visas. It therefore came up with the ingenious grounds for refusing them, and for confirming their intended deception, that when questioned as to the number of water buffalo their father owned, the two children had given different answers. It took the personal intervention of Sydney Bidwell, Southall's MP, to guarantee their passage.

Detective Superintendent Stewart Hull, however, has no involvement in British immigration policy; based over the river in the leafy suburb of Barnes, moreover, and covering serious crimes all over west

London, he is removed from any local antagonism between the police and group-like the SMG. He admits he was surprised at Mrs Sekhon's change of mind about the motive behind her husband's death. On his first visit to the family, he says, he had explained the evidence available from the scene of the crime, and his own theories about a motive. (Steven Coker, meanwhile had been brazening out three police interviews by saying he'd spent the Friday evening at home watching television.)

Hull's team had found the dead man's wallet, containing £85, still in the inside pocket of his jacket. His gold watch was still on his wrist. But, paradoxically, this supported one of Hull's suggestions - that Coker's intention had been robbery. The kitchen knife he had used on Sekhon he had brought from his home, so he must have expected to use it. The bag he retrieved from the back of the cab contained some cassette tapes he'd apparently stolen from another car that day. "It seemed likely", says Hull, "that he set out to rob the guy, it went wrong, and then he flipped." Hull's hypothesis is backed up by three pieces of evidence. One witness later claimed Coker told her, "I did it because he would have recognised me." Another - not adduced in court for technical reasons, says Hull, but he has the signed statement - confirmed that Coker indicated he'd tried to rob the minicab driver. And thirdly, though you could read it several ways, there is the struggle between the two men. Either they could have been arguing, and eventually fighting, in a dispute over the fare (Hull's other theory), or it was an unprovoked assault in which the minicab driver was desperately trying to defend himself against dreadful wounds, or Sekhon had put up some resistance, ultimately and grievously successful, to being robbed. Mrs Sekhon seemed to accept the idea of robbery when he first went to see her, says Hull, even if she was understandably sceptical because the wallet and watch were still on her husband's body.

As for a racial motivation, says Hull, "It was never a factor, right from the start. If I had found one piece of evidence, I would have investigated it to the hilt. Anyone who knows me knows I would have done." Hull was aware of Coker's previous convictions, and that one was for assaulting an Asian youth. "Let's be honest," he says. "Ninety per cent of kids like him in that sort of area are going to be racist. They're not of high intelligence, they're poorly educated, ignorant of the history of ethnic minorities in this country and the emergence of a multiracial community. It

wouldn't surprise me if he was a racist." But Hull insists that in his investigation "nothing came to light" among the facts of the case – not one chance reference from one of the many witnesses to Coker's behaviour before and after the murder.

On the Friday night Coker had gone to the pub with a couple of friends: Hull talked to them. Afterwards Coker took the cab to the Redwood Estate to visit Sarah Eyles, a friend of the girlfriend he had recently split up with. Sarah Eyles is 22; she took over the tenancy of her house on the estate in Cranford when her parents moved out, and shared it at weekends with a number of younger friends. Coker knocked on her door in the early hours straight after the killing, covered in blood, and insisted that Eyles take him in and wash the blood off his clothes. Over a spooky and distressing weekend – a scenario Ian McEwan could have written – Eyles and the other girls present, one as young as 13, all of them under 18, helped each other to wring the clothes out, hang them on the line, and to hide Coker's bag, containing the murder weapon, in her loft – Coker remaining under the same roof throughout. Superintendent Hull talked to all of them, too. "These were young kids," he says, "working-class, hardly skilled at concealing things or bluffing. Not one word came up about him talking about 'Wogs' or 'Pakis' or even 'Indians'." Nor did Coker let anything slip to Hull himself, or to any other police officer, or to any of the psychiatrists who subsequently

examined him, or to anyone else that would have given a lead to a racial motive. "If there had been," says Hull, "well, it just would have been there, as a fact." Hull says he didn't know of the stories about Coker and the Golf Links gang; he didn't see the SMG's files on the man, and he wasn't offered them.

The story of Steven Coker himself hardly clarifies the picture. His childhood followed a classic trajectory of brutalising and disturbance: beaten by a child-minder at an early age, beaten badly by his father, who also assaulted his mother; hyperactivity from infancy, an above-average level of medical treatment, including a suspected fractured skull likely to have been inflicted by his father. Then, according to his solicitor, "at around ten or 11 he went seriously off the rails," when his mother left home for 18 months, eventually returning only for his father to depart for good. He slid into truancy, solvent-abuse, drug-taking, and delinquency, left school without academic qualifications, and had no regular employment. Coker fathered two children by different mothers; both babies died, the first a fortnight after birth, the second in the womb. At his trial one of the defence doctors argued that the news of the loss of the second child, only days before the murder, had unhinged Coker's mind so far as to cause an abnormality of the mind which drove him to kill – but there is no evidence that he visited or even bothered to contact the baby's mother after her miscarriage. He told the other doctor called by the defence that on the day of the murder he had been smoking cannabis until the evening, then drunk

seven pints of strong lager, eaten some magic mushrooms, had several shots of vodka, and then dropped some LSD which either indicates the constitution of Rasputin or an ingeniously elaborate attempt to assert diminished responsibility.

"Rather a sad case," says his solicitor. "A hooligan" is the term Superintendent Hull chooses. Coker's school report, his solicitor says, provides no evidence of racist behaviour; there are no traceable links with any right-wing organisations like the National Front. As for Coker's own explanation for why he killed the taxi-driver, he has steadfastly given no clue. "None of us," Hull concedes, "not even the four psychiatrists who examined him, was able to get inside his mind." "He doesn't know why he did it," says his solicitor. "I think he would want me to say it wasn't racist, it was motiveless. It could have been anybody." Hull is inclined to agree. Apply the negative definition of a racial attack – would he not have done it, had the taxi driver not been Asian – and Hull is emphatic. "I am quite clear in my mind that exactly the same thing would have happened that night, whether the colour of the driver had been white, black or yellow."

The central question of the story, therefore, seems likely to remain its central mystery. What was Coker's motivation? The only witness at the scene of the crime is dead; his attacker isn't saying. The police have no evidence to suggest it was a racially motivated assault – but precious little to exclude the possibility. They didn't even need to postulate a motive in order to identify their suspect: luckily Sarah Eyles turned him in to them after only

Asian children playing in the Golf Links Estate in Southall, where Steven Coker lived



two days. Even the nature of the murder itself invites speculation. Was it an inept attempt at a robbery which unravelled into a clumsy, protracted killing – or was it a fevered, hateful job of obliteration?

The Sekhon Support Group had no doubts. "One thing is certain," ran a leaflet announcing a fund-raising evening in May, "in the weeks that the trial progresses, Sekhon's murder will be shorn of any racial motivation." The fund-raising gathering took place in Southall's Dominion Centre, where Sekhon's body had lain in state back in January, and where years before, when it was the old Dominion Cinema, the body of Gurdip Chaggar had lain in 1976, and that of Blair Peach in 1979. In his address Suresh Grover spoke of the universal closedown of shops and businesses on the day of the funeral. "This was the first time", he proclaimed, "that businesses in Southall had entered the contentious political arena." Then a locally made film, *Collective Memories*, was shown, resuming the history of racial conflict in Southall: shots of the SPG charge in 1979, the demonstration after the Chaggar murder, the sombre procession behind the Sekhon cortège. And then the film cuts from the banners and placards and the angry, grim faces, and Kuldip Sekhon himself is on the screen. It is home-movie footage of a dinner-dance: a tall, handsome man is dancing with friends, nodding at the people sitting round. The camera tracks him bumpily up and down the hall – he glances a smile into it as he twirls past. Here, all of a sudden, is the victim: a man alive who is now dead. "The hardest thing to understand", the commentary is intoning, "is that he was killed purely for the colour of his skin."

Earlier in May, in the local government elections, the Labour administration in Ealing – which includes Southall – was voted out. Its leader reflected that the memory of a past 65 per cent rates rise had probably done the damage. The incoming Conservatives were swift to fulfil their manifesto pledges: the council's Race Unit was abolished, and the Indian Workers Association, the Southall Youth Movement and the Southall Monitoring Group all lost their grants. The new council leader, Martin Mallam, was quoted as saying that "We will not give money to political groups, and we do not act on the Labour philosophy that if it happens to be black it gets funded." The Conservative MP for Ealing, Harry Greenway, was much criticised by local community groups for "playing the race card" in the election campaign by orchestrating opposition to plans

for a new mosque in nearby Northolt.

One organisation escaping the new grant cuts is the Ealing Racial Equality Council, whose Southall office has several thousand immigration cases on its books as well as cases of racial discrimination and harassment. Andrew Houseley took over as Community Relations Officer after the 1979 disturbances, during which his predecessor ended up being dragged along the gutter by his hair by two members of the Special Patrol Group. But he takes issue with the SMG's elision of Southall's past history with its present as a context for the Sekhon murder. "In 1981 the police took a pasting over the skinhead gig," says Houseley. "After that they put in a tremendous effort to understand the community."

"I would argue that the vast majority of Asian people here think they're doing very well out of living in Southall. You very rarely get an incident here. Anyone can go out at night. That isn't to say that some people's lives aren't sheer bloody misery as a result of racial harassment."

The SMG's approach, in his view, is somewhat flawed. "They point the finger and call the police, council and courts racist, but I wonder where it gets you in helping the victims. I believe there is more than one way of skinning a cat. In some ways SMG is about building SMG – they really have found a paucity of things to deal with."

On 16 July this year the SMG mounted a demonstration outside the Old Bailey for the first day of Steven Coker's trial. Members handed out leaflets alleging a racially motivated murder, mentioning Coker by name, and by two o'clock Suresh Grover and Kuldip Sekhon's nephew found themselves in court number two being warned about contempt of court. The leaflet's headline hardly helped the SMG's case. MURDERED BY RACISTS, it read – still harking back to the minicab controller's testimony that Coker wanted a cab "for me and my mate", even though there had never been the slightest question of an actual accomplice.

Not one of the young witnesses called by the Crown – including a girl of 13, and one youth who couldn't read out the oath – throughout all the cross-examinations, some under considerable distress, others visibly communicating their dislike of Coker, let slip a word to suggest his awareness of the victim's race. (Despite initially disavowing that a racial aspect formed any part of the Crown's case, however, Michael Worsley QC, for the prosecution, inadvertently or inexplicably made repeated

references to "this Asian cab driver".) Coker pleaded guilty to manslaughter, so the only issue for the jury was whether diminished responsibility would rebut the Crown's charge of murder. While doctors argued about personality disorders, the question of a motive dropped out of court.

Steven Coker was found guilty of murder. Sending him to prison for life, Mr Justice Judge described his killing of Kuldip Sekhon as "a brutal attack, a sustained attack – and you calmly walked away, leaving him to die in the street. Even now I can detect in you no sign of remorse for what you did, no sorrow for his grieving wife and children." But the judge went further. "In view of certain materials put before me," he said (alluding to the SMG's leaflet), "I should say that there is no evidence that this was a racist attack, or that the colour of the dead man was in any way important."

Superintendent Hull considers that the SMG's adoption of Mrs Sekhon was "making political gain, and I told them so". The SMG, meanwhile, has had to make half its staff redundant, and it is still receiving calls for help from as far afield as Greenwich.

Already it is at work on a major case over at Hammersmith, says Suresh Grover, in which a black minicab driver is alleged to have been assaulted by five plain-clothes police officers, who have since been suspended. "Since 1975", says Grover, "I have come across only three racial murders in Southall. I hope I never see another – never have to wash another body, see a body when it has decomposed. We get accused of initiating the Sekhon Support Group to promote ourselves – but look, it has alienated us from the council, lost us our grant. This kind of campaign finishes off a small organisation like us."

Malgit Sekhon left for India the day after the trial finished, taking her husband's ashes back for burial, baffled that the whole court case had failed even to touch on the possibility that Kuldip Sekhon had been killed because of his colour. Against the other available reasons – that he was killed over a £2 cab fare, that he was killed for money his attacker didn't ultimately take, or, worse still, that he was killed for absolutely no reason at all – a racial motive might even seem like a consolation. As the judge pronounced a life sentence, Steven Coker broke, but only just, the impassive composure he had maintained throughout the eight days of the trial. He sat down, and briefly leaned his chin on to the edge of the dock. Rising to be taken down, he shrugged to himself. It could have meant anything. ●

Sunrise by satellite for Europe's Asians

A west London ethnic radio station is going international, with a little help from BSkyB. Martin Wroe reports

THIS MONTH the most popular radio station in the London suburbs of Southall and Hounslow in effect became a national, even an international service. In a deal struck with the satellite television company BSkyB, anyone with a satellite dish tuned to the Astra satellite can now also tune in to the 24-hour Asian station Sunrise Radio *, the most successful of the new wave of local commercial radio stations.

Each satellite channel has a clutch of audio channels linked to it and BSkyB is leasing one on its Movie Channel to Sunrise Radio. It is not a scrambled channel, so even those who do not subscribe to the Movie Channel can take the Asian radio service.

Avtar Lit, founder and chief executive of Sunrise Radio, already a media mogul in the Asian community, will now be able to reach an estimated eight million Asians in the UK and as many again throughout Europe — provided they want him to. The signs from the success of Sunrise in west London suggest they will be only too pleased to buy a dish and tune in. The station has an unrivalled 92 per cent penetration into the Asian community in its catchment area. Nearly 30 per cent of the 1.5 million people in that area are Asian, the biggest concentration of Indians and Pakistanis outside the sub-continent.

Sunrise's combination of Indian and Pakistani music, topical discussions and thorough Asian news coverage has won it an enthusiastic audience. As Mr Lit points out: "If you walk through Southall in a traffic jam on the weekend you can listen to the same song all the way up Broadway."

Estate agencies even increase the appeal of local properties to prospective purchasers by highlighting homes within reach of Sunrise Radio. At least part of the station's popularity Mr Lit puts down to its commercials. For Sun-

rise listeners, advertising is a plus point, not a negative one.

"The Asian community see it as a bonus which goes back to their economic status in coming here," he explained. "They are always looking for a bargain and because they are retailers themselves they like to know what the competition is offering."

That's why they are not big listeners to BBC radio, he says, apart from the Bush House Asian service. The bulk of advertising on Sunrise is from Asian customers, but this is gradually changing.

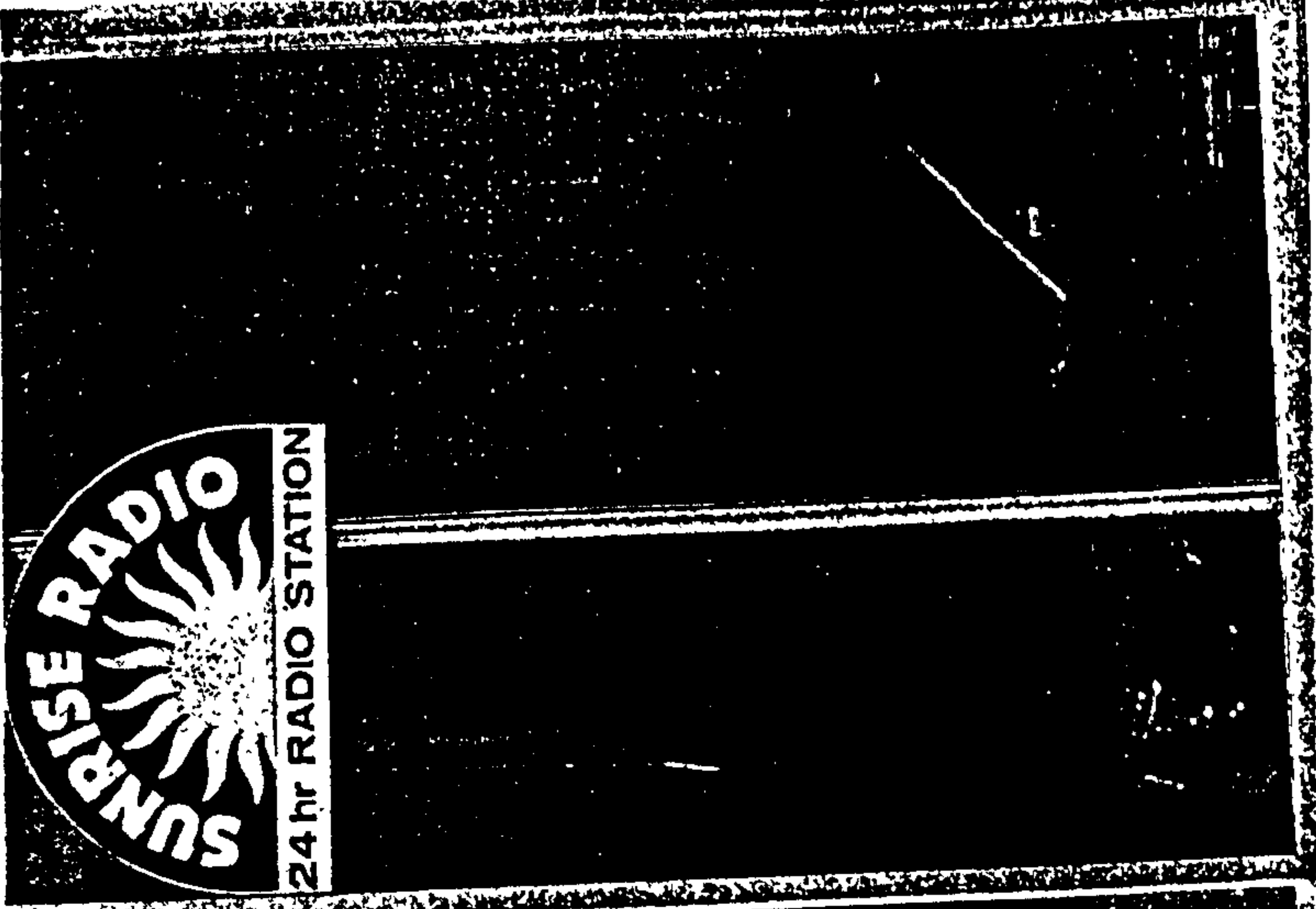
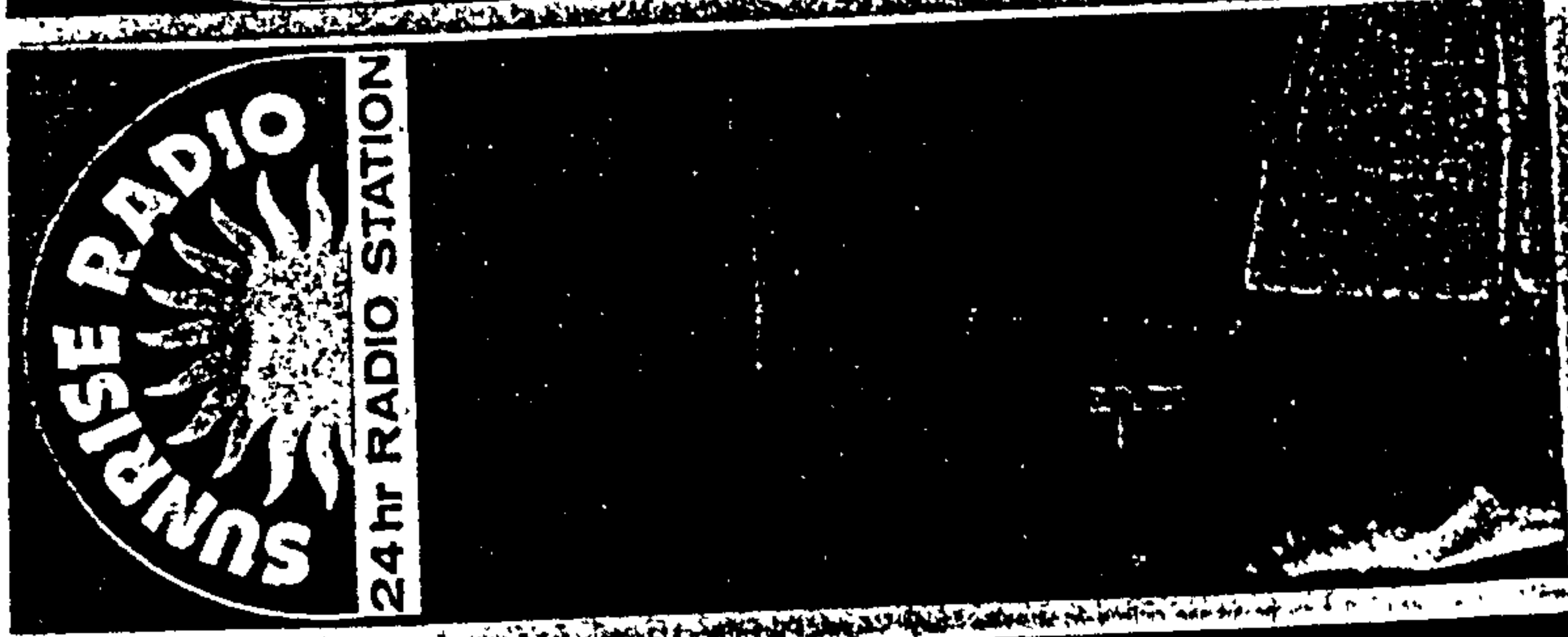
Mr Lit is sure the benefits to BSkyB in boosting its viewing audience will match the growth in his radio audience. He estimates that a million Asian homes will purchase a dish within six months.

"With the Asian community the things spreads like wildfire," he explains enthusiastically. "I could take out a full-page ad in all the English newspapers and waste a fortune, but I don't need to because my selling force is my listeners in west London and Yorkshire."

Since going on air in November 1989, the station's headquarters in Hounslow has been deluged with letters and phone calls from Asians outside its broadcasting radius begging to receive the service. Some have spent hundreds of pounds on sophisticated aerials, to no avail. Avtar Lit is convinced he is on to a winner.

"We say to our listeners, if you have a friend or relative visiting who likes the sound of our station, just tell them it's available on the Astra satellite . . . That's all they need to say and it will happen. It will persuade them easily."

He points out that the Asian community is enthusiastic about leisure products that make their language and culture accessible; such was the excitement over watching pre-recorded Asian films when video players first came on the market that sales to



Avtar Lak at Sunrise Radio in Hounslow, west London. The station has an unrivalled 92 per cent penetration of its catchment's Asian community

Photograph: Nicholas Turpin

Asian households outpaced those to other homes.

Mr Lak is poised to capitalise on his new European audience. Local advertisers on Sunrise see European centres of Asian population, such as Paris, as perfectly legitimate potential customers, he says.

"Because the major centre of the Asian community outside Asia is west London, when the Indian or Pakistani comes to London, whether he is from Hamburg or New York, he doesn't go to Re-

gent Street or Oxford Street. He goes to Southall Broadway."

Even though Sunrise will not be changing its format, Mr Lak believes it will appeal to Asians throughout western Europe. Local news coverage from Southall and Hounslow is so turn-off to the Asian listener in Denmark.

Although Bradford City Radio, of which Mr Lak was also a founding shareholder, has not fared as well as Sunrise Radio - it turned over a paltry £57,000 in its first

year against Sunrise's impressive £1m - he has now instituted a radical cost-cutting programme, changed the station's management and renamed it Sunrise. The prospect of turning it around is not one to daunt him.

Like many other successful Asian businessmen in this country, he has worked his way up from the bottom of the economic pile since arriving with his mother in 1962. His father, formerly a bank clerk, had arrived four years ear-

lier and taken up a factory job. Avtar trained as an engineer in the Navy, then ran an Asian station in the US before getting into cable television in Britain, launching the illegal radio station SINA, and finally winning the franchise in Southall.

Now that the Sky deal is in place, Mr Lak is not resting on his laurels. He is talking to The Radio Authority about a network of small stations serving small Asian communities, which would take

the Sunrise service with "wind-downs" for their own advertising and programmes. He is also preparing an application for one of the two remaining national commercial franchises. And then? "An Asian television service," he says with a grin. "That has to be our next move."

• To hear into Sunrise Radio on the Asian satellite, press channel 18 on the remote control and then press audio three times for audio channel three.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER FIVE

TV ADVERTISING

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APPENDIX CHAPTER 5

5.0 ATTITUDES TOWARDS ADVERTISEMENTS

TV ads are seen mainly as a form of entertainment rather than as a means of persuasion or information, according to the results of a survey of seventy 16-17 year olds, conducted as part of the present research, in September 1990. 86% of respondents found TV adverts entertaining whilst only 37% found them informative and 16% persuasive.

TV ads are discussed and enjoyed more among peers (57%) than among family (36%). More girls claim they discuss ads with their friends (77%) and their families (60%) than boys do with their friends (37%) and families (11%). 47% of all respondents claim that their families enjoy them and often 'have a laugh' about them. Yet 44% of all respondents report that they find most ads boring and hardly ever discuss them. There is no significant difference between boys (46%) and girls (43%). When the ads come on TV, 38% claim they usually go and get something to eat or drink while they are on. The figures are similar among boys (31%) and girls (40%).

If a product has a tempting ad 31% claim they will ask their parents to buy it but this is more common among girls (43%) than boys (20%). Mothers are seen to be more influenced to buy certain products because of an ad (21%) than fathers (10%) but young people consider themselves to be more motivated by ads into purchasing products than their parents. 53% of all respondents report that they have bought a product because of the ad, slightly more females (60%) than males (46%).

Therefore, although ads are seen primarily as entertaining, it would appear that the persuasive powers of certain ads is evidenced in consumer decision-making. Yet it would be misleading in most cases to assume a direct relationship between an ad and a consumer decision since ethnographic data suggests that peer group pressure or influence combines with the appeal of ads to motivate consumer decisions. The lack of interest in 'most' ads can be explained by the fact that advertisers

are ever more successful in targetting specific consumer markets and the teenage market is but one among many.

5.1 ADS WHICH I TAKE MOST NOTICE OF

Young people claim that they take most notice of ads with good music (78%) a funny storyline (74%) and attractive characters (58%). Other important criteria for engaging with ads include a good slogan (44%) ads showing 'products I would like to have' (34%) and ads which show 'products which relate to my dreams' (33%). The least important criteria of interest appear to be ads which 'relate to my ambitions' (23%) ads with young people in them (21%) ads 'with a lifestyle' that appeals to me (18%) ads showing things I can afford (14%) and, least of all, ads that are honest (11%).

Music and humour are the elements found most appealing in an ad. In recent years, the revival of songs from the 1960's and 1970's in TV advertising has led to their re-launch by record companies and their success in the popular music charts. The lyrics and tunes and humourous catchphrases which become integrated into peer talk are an important part of young people's engagement with TV ads.

There are some gender differences in the relative importance of these criteria which are worth pointing out. The biggest discrepancies in the figures appear to relate to taking most notice of ads with

- 'attractive characters' (74% of girls to 43% of boys)
- 'things I would like to have' (51% girls to 17% of boys)
- 'products that relate to my dreams' (48% girls to 20% boys)
- 'a lifestyle that appeals to me' (29% girls to 8% boys)

5.2 ADS WHICH I LIKE

Respondents were asked to name three ads which they liked (see Table). Of the 205 ads listed by the seventy respondents 78% of those listed could be grouped into product categories which relate to basic human needs like nourishment, clothing and personal hygiene e.g. drinks (41%) food (15%) clothes and footwear (12%) and body, face and hair products

TABLE 5.10 "I TAKE MOST NOTICE OF ADS WITH...."

	FEMALE (N=35)	MALE (N=35)	TOTAL (N=70)

GOOD MUSIC	83%	74%	78%
FUNNY STORYLINE	74%	74%	74%
ATTRACTIVE CHARACTERS	74%	42%	58%
PRODUCTS I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE	51%	17%	34%
GOOD SLOGAN	31%	34%	33%
GOOD PRODUCT	31%	34%	33%
PRODUCTS WHICH RELATE TO MY DREAMS	46%	20%	33%
PRODUCTS WHICH RELATE TO MY AMBITIONS	20%	26%	23%
YOUNG PEOPLE IN THEM	26%	17%	21%
LIFESTYLE WHICH APPEALS TO ME	28%	8%	18%
THINGS WHICH I CAN AFFORD	14%	14%	14%
HONESTY	14%	8%	11%

(10%). The remaining 22% could be grouped into six categories; 5% of all ads listed were for ads with babies and animals and 1% for cars. The British Telecom series would appear to be a long standing favourite among some (3%) whilst others had a more obvious current appeal Electricity Shares (5%), British Satellite Broadcasting (5%) and Hamlet cigars (3%).

However, this apparent regularity of appeal is compromised by a gender analysis of the figures (see Table 2.0 and 5.21) Whilst there is no major gender difference in the appeal of ads for soft drinks and food (68% of girls and 59% of boys cite a soft drink among their favourites and 49% of girls and 43% of boys listed chocolate or other types of food among their favourites) striking gender differences occur in all other categories. For example, 54% of the boys listed an ad for beer among their favourites as opposed to only 12% of the girls which is perhaps not entirely surprising given the that most beer ads, in spite of being humorous, are targetted at the male section of the population. Paradoxically, however, ads for trainers and for jeans usually designed to have 'unisex' appeal are mentioned by only 8% of boys and a surprising 71% of girls, a point to which we shall return later.

Adverts for body, face and hair products appear to make little or no impact on boys (0%) but are more popular among girls (41%). Yet, of the ads in this category mentioned by girls, 31% are for Gillette shaving gel and razors. Clearly, the appeal of the ad lies not with the product but with the young man advertising it who is commonly referred to as a 'gorgeous hunk'.

Figures for the remaining ads are very low but suggest gender differences in the appeal of different ads. The adverts for the sale of electricity shares were popular among some boys (22%), partly because of the mix of popular soundtracks ('I've got the power') with the Frankenstein theme. In contrast, only 8% of girls list this series of ads and 14% cite the British Telecom ads. The survey figures, however, do not reflect the popularity of this series of ads as is evidenced in peer ad talk. Girls in particular like to re-enact the domestic scenes

TABLE 5.20 ADVERTISEMENTS I LIKE

This table shows the percentage of total ads listed (205) for different products.

	----- % of total ads listed -----
<u>DRINKS</u>	
SOFT DRINKS.	22%
BEER	11%
COFFEE	8%

	41%
 <u>FOOD</u>	
CHOCOLATE	8%
OTHER	7%

	15%
 <u>CLOTHES AND FOOTWEAR</u>	
TRAINERS(LA Gear)	7%
JEANS	5%

	12%
 <u>BODY, HAIR, FACE</u>	
GILLETTE (razors, cream)	4%
HAIR (shampoo, gel)	3%
FACE (creams)	3%

	10%
 ADS WITH ANIMALS/BABIES	5%
CARS	1%
BRITISH TELECOM	3%
ELECTRICITY SHARES	5%
BRITISH SATELLITE BROADCASTING	5%
HAMLET CIGARS	3%

TABLE 5.21 ADVERTISEMENTS I LIKE

This table shows the percentage of all females (N=35) and all males (n=35) who cite the following ads as among their favourites

	FEMALES (N=35)	MALES (N=35)
<u>SOFT DRINKS</u>		
COCA COLA	29%	17%
PEPSI COLA	17%	11%
IRON BREW	17%	20%
OTHER	5%	11%
	-----	-----
	68%	59%
	-----	-----
<u>BEER</u>		
CARLING BLACK LABEL	6%	26%
OTHER	6%	28%
	-----	-----
	12%	54%
	-----	-----
COFFEE	11%	6%
<u>FOOD</u>		
CHOCOLATE	29%	23%
OTHER	20%	20%
	-----	-----
	49%	43%
	-----	-----
<u>CLOTHES AND FOOTWEAR</u>		
TRAINERS: L A GEAR	43%	6%
JEANS	28%	2%
	-----	-----
	71%	8%
	-----	-----

<u>BODY, FACE, HAIR</u>		
GILLETTE	31%	0%
HAIR	5%	0%
FACE	5%	0%
	-----	-----
	41%	0%
ADS WITH BABIES AND ANIMALS	26%	8%
CARS	0%	8%
BRITISH TELECOM	14%	0%
ELECTRITICY SHARES	8%	22%
BSB	8%	22%
HAMLET CIGARS	0%	17%

and imitate the actress Maureen Lipman who plays the protective but 'nosey' grandmother figure. They claim to identify with the close extended Jewish family.

The categories drink, food and clothes were arrived at with the assistance of informants with relative ease but it was only after interviews and discussions that we were able to formulate a category 'Ads with animals and babies. These are more popular among some girls (26%), who find them 'sweet' and 'cute', than boys (8%). The British Satellite Broadcasting ads are popular with some boys (22%) due to the appearance of comedian Lenny Henry but seemingly, not so much with girls (8%). Similarly, the Hamlet Cigars series of humorous ads are popular with boys (17%) but not with girls.

These figures may at first seem unremarkable but when one considers the potentially vast number of ads from which young people might select, then, to find such clear patterns points to the 'success' of ad agencies in targetting the teenage consumer. Whilst marked gender differences emerge in certain categories, ads for soft drinks have unisex appeal and hold a place of prime importance because they represents a 'teenage' lifestyle to which they can relate.

5.4 ADS WHICH ARE TARGETTED AT PEOPLE LIKE ME

If we compare these figures with those in response to the question, 'which ads are targetted at people like you?', then, soft drinks again is the primary ad category. Out of 70 young people, 77% listed soft drinks, 71% jeans and trainers, 38% various media products, 42% body, face and hair products, 31% food, 25% public information ads, 12% various pieces of technology (12%) and, surprisingly 15% toys!

But again there are clear gender differences which emerge in the figures. Of 35 females, 99% list the name of a soft drink as a type of ad aimed at 'people like me' compared with 55% of males. More girls cite Pepsi and alternative brands such as Sprite and Sunkist than do boys. Interestingly, unlike the boys, girls do not list Iron Brew ads, a

product, which many confuse with beer, inspite of their romantic narratives, they uses male strength as a selling technique.

More girls (51%) than boys (11%) perceive food ads to be targetted at them. Chocolate ads are seen to be targetted at both girls (17%) and boys (8%) but other categories of 'fast' or 'junk' food such as pizzas, hamburgers, crisps and sweets are cited more by girls (34%) than boys (3%).

Ads for trainers, especially L.A. Gear and Nike, are perceived as being targetted at 'people like me' by a similar number of boys (51%) and girls (57%) whereas jeans, particularly Leavis 501's, are cited more by girls (28%) than boys (6%).

Males are more likely to perceive media products as being targetted at them (49%) than girls (29%). Ads for records and cassettes are seen to be aimed at girls (29%) more than boys (17%) whilst films, videos are cited more by boys (14%) than girls (6%) as are magazines (17% and 3% respectively). However, the figures are low that no general patterns can be deduced.

Ads for body, face and hair products are listed by a total of 83% of girls and no boys. Even products like after shave are seen by girls to be targetted at them. Boys alone see various types of computer hardware and software (17%) as well as music systems (8%) as being aimed at them whilst no girls mention these.

Public information ads are seen by both girls (22%) and boys (27%) to be aimed at them. Similar numbers of boys and girls see public information ads for drugs (17% and 14% respectively) and AIDS (10% and 8%) as being targetted at them.

Finally, I was surprised to find that 20% of girls and 11% of boys thought that toy ads were aimed at them. Does this reflect a self-perception among teenagers as still being children or are they referring

TABLE 5.30 ADS WHICH ARE AIMED AT 'PEOPLE LIKE ME'

This table shows the percentage of all females (N=35) and all males (n=35) who cite the following ads as among those 'targetted at people like me'

	FEMALES	MALES
<u>SOFT DRINKS</u>		
COCA COLA	40%	31%
PEPSI COLA	31%	5%
IRON BREW	0 %	8%
OTHER	28%	11%
	-----	-----
	99%	55%
	-----	-----
<u>FOOD</u>		
CHOCOLATE	17%	8%
OTHER	34%	3%
	-----	-----
	51%	11%
	-----	-----
<u>CLOTHES AND FOOTWEAR</u>		
TRAINERS	57%	51%
JEANS	28%	6%
	-----	-----
	85%	57%
	-----	-----
<u>MEDIA</u>		
RECORDS/CASSETTES	20%	17%
VIDEOS/FILMS	6%	14%
MAGAZINES	3%	17%
	-----	-----
	29%	48%
	-----	-----

BODY, FACE. HAIR

MAKE-UP	29%	0%
PERFUME	20%	0%
SHAMPOO	14%	0%
ACNE LOTION	8%	0%
AFTER SHAVE	14%	0%

-----	-----
85%	0%

-----	-----
-------	-------

PUBLIC INFORMATION ADS

DRUGS	14%	17%
AIDS	8%	10%

-----	-----
22%	27%

-----	-----
-------	-------

TECHNOLOGY

COMPUTER HARDWARE/SOFTWARE	0%	17%
MUSIC SYSTEMS	0%	8%
TOYS	20%	11%

to toys in the sense of computer games and such like? We shall return to these questions in the evaluation of the data presented here.

5.4 ADVERTISEMENTS WHICH I DISLIKE

Washing powder ads appear to be the least favoured among girls (70%) and boys (41%). There is a strong tendency among girls to reject the gender stereotyping in these ads and to use these ads especially in mixed gender discussions to drive home a point to the boys about the inequalities of domestic duties in their homes. The ads for Radion washing powder are much maligned and cited by 26% of girls and 22% of boys. The very banale and direct selling techniques are found to be unsophisticated but it is also recognised by some informants that this is the mark of their success

'The Radion ads use reverse psychology techniques, the ads are so bad that everyone starts talking about how bad they are and that sort of gets the product into people's minds [...] ads aren't supposed to act on your conscience - is that how you say it - your conscious mind'
(Nirmal, 18 year old boy)

Various ads for food are cited by girls (37%) and boys (17%) as among their least favourite. These include ads for cereals (Sugar puffs), sweets (Smarties and Quality Street), burgers (Burger King) butter (Anchor) and chocolate (Flake and Kinder eggs) beans (Heinz). It is of interest that most of these ads are targetted at children rather than teenagers and thus many young people wish to distinguish themselves from children and do so by voicing disapproval of these ads.

Ads for dog and cat food are also cited by both boys (14%) and (11%) and girls as among their least favourites ads.

"I think they're so stupid, you know how they say 70% of dogs prefer Chum [...] I mean how do they know? did they ask the dogs? or maybe they tasted it themselves [...] it's just a con!"

(Inderjeet 16 year old girl)

Some boys appear to have a dislike for the Kleenex and Andrex ads (19%) because they use babies and cute animals which is seen to evoke an

TABLE 5.40 ADS I DISLIKE

This table shows the percentage of all females (N=35) and all males (n=35) who cite the following ads as among those they dislike

	FEMALES(N=35)	MALES(N=35)
<u>WASHING POWDERS AND LIQUIDS</u>		
RADION	26%	22%
FAIRY LIQUID	20%	11%
OTHERS	24%	8%
	-----	-----
	70%	41%
	-----	-----
<u>HAIR AND BODY PRODUCTS</u>		
WASH AND GO	26%	0%
HEAD AND SHOULDERS	14%	0%
IMPULSE	9%	0%
	-----	-----
	49%	0%
	-----	-----
<u>FOOD</u>		
DIVERSE	37%	17%
<u>OTHERS</u>		
DOG AND CAT FOOD	11%	14%
PEPE JEANS	17%	3%
ANDREX	0%	11%
KLEENEX	0%	8%
BRITISH TELECOM	0%	17%
BRITISH GAS	0%	14%
BRITISH RAIL	0%	5%
YELLOW PAGES	0%	17%

appeal to feminine qualities. They distinguish their male tastes by rejecting the 'cuteness' of appeal. Others protest a dislike for the British Telecom (17%) and Yellow Pages ads (17%).

5.6 ADS AND CONSUMER DECISIONS?

60% of females and 46% of males claim to have bought a product because they had 'seen the ad and wanted to try it'. (see Table 5.60) These tend to be products within the consumer power of young people. In total 79% of girls claim to have bought hair, face and beauty products, chocolate and soft drinks as a result of ads whereas only 28% of boys claim to have done so. Other products which only a few girls mention having purchased because of seeing an ad are jeans, trainers, perfume, make-up, music, videos and films, magazines. Boys claim they have bought chocolate (14%) and soft drinks because of the ads. A few boys mention music, sportswear jeans, sweets, crisps, Gillette and Lynx deodorant. But in order to understand how consumer decisions are made we need some information about young people's consumer power.

5.7 CONSUMER POWER

Relatively few 16-17 year olds have part-time jobs (28% of males and 17% of females) (see Table 5.70). However, young people are very resourceful in earning money for themselves both among peers, (for example, in video piracy) and in the family. In the large scale survey 22% claimed they earned money inside the family helping with family businesses and shops (N=300); 12% report that they earned money outside the family in part-time employment (N=299) and 19% report that they help the family earn money (N=312).

Boys get more pocket money than girls (see Table 5.80) 56% of girls receive up to £5 per week (and 34% of these are at the lower end of the scale getting £1 - £3) as compared with 37% of boys. In contrast, 71% of boys receive between £5 and £15 per week. 13% of boys get between £15-£30 per week whereas no girl reports getting more than £15 per week. 22% of girls and 16% of boys claim that they do not get set amounts of pocket money but ask their parents for money when they need it. It is difficult to assess with any precision young people's spending power.

TABLE 5.50 HAVE YOU EVER BOUGHT A PRODUCT BECAUSE YOU'VE SEEN THE AD AND WANTED TO TRY IT

	----- FEMALE -----	----- MALE -----
YES	60%	46%
NO	40%	54%

TABLE 5.60 TYPES OF PRODUCTS BOUGHT AFTER SEEING THE ADVERT

	----- FEMALES -----	----- MALES -----
HAIR/FACE PRODUCTS	48%	0%
CHOCOLATE	26%	14%
SOFT DRINKS	5%	14%

OTHER PRODUCTS MENTIONED BY FEMALES:

jeans, trainers, perfume, make-up, music, videos/films, magazines

OTHER PRODUCTS MENTIONED BY MALES:

music, sportswear, jeans,sweets, crisips, Gillette, Lynx deodorant

TABLE 5.70 PART TIME EMPLOYMENT

	----- FEMALES -----	----- MALES -----
YES	17%	28%
NO	83%	72%

Girl's jobs include: cashier and sales assistant in chemist, supermarket

Boy's jobs include: cashier, sales assistant, building work with father,

The figures above refer to pocket money for one's daily requirements for food, drink and entertainment. They do not refer to money received for buying more expensive consumer items such as clothes and trainers, money received in the form of presents at birthdays, etc

5.8 CONSUMER SPENDING

Most daily expenditure is on food and sweets. However, boys usually spend money on video and arcade games (26%) but girls do not whilst girls usually spend money on beauty products and school equipment (25%) but boys do not. Girls buy magazines more than boys (42% of girls and 22% of boys) although an equal number spend money on music (20%). An equal number of boys and girls (17%) spend money on clothes but more boys than girls spend money on videos (14% and 8% respectively)

Given the popularity of the soft drinks ads and the commonly held view that soft drinks ads are aimed at 'people like me' it is surprising that so few young people claim to spend money on drinks, 17% of boys and 11% of girls 'usually' spend on drinks. Those who take school dinners at the school where research was conducted (figures obtained from school office - 300 out of 650 pupils on roll) will buy food (most commonly chips and beans or mini pizzas) and a drink everyday at the canteen. The drinks are cheaper versions of Coke and other soft drinks which may render them insignificant, alternatively, perhaps the habitual nature of such purchases renders them invisible to the teenage consumer but this is a point to which we shall return. But perhaps the way the question is posed is unhelpful

How much money do you spend per week, roughly?

what do you spend it on mainly?

The question is ambiguous because it can be interpreted to mean what do you spend most money on in which case drinks are relatively less costly than food or it could be interpreted to mean which products do you buy mostly. In any case this requires further data to illuminate the problem.

5.9 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

This section has highlighted a number of features of young people's

TABLE 5.80 AVERAGE POCKET MONEY PER WEEK

	FEMALES	MALES
£1-£3	34%	0%
£5	22%	37%
£10	8%	17%
£15	8%	17%
£20	0%	8%
£30	0%	5%
varies	22%	16%

TABLE 5.90 WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE USUALLY SPEND THEIR MONEY ON

	FEMALES(N=35)	MALES (N=35)
FOOD/SWEETS	51%	34%
MUSIC	20%	20%
MAGAZINES	42%	22%
CLOTHES	17%	17%
DRINKS	17%	11%
ARCADES/VIDEOGAMES	0%	26%
PERFUME/MAKE-UP	17%	0%
SCHOOL EQUIPMENT	8%	0%
VIDEOS	8%	14%

engagement with TV ads. TV ads are seen to be entertaining rather than informative and persuasive. They are discussed more among peers than in the family and girls tend to discuss ads more than boys. Just under half of respondents find the majority of ads boring and use the time to do other things in between programmes. In spite of this over half of all respondents claim they have bought a product because they have seen the ad.

The most appealing ads are those with good music and a humourous storyline. The most popular categories of ads among both boys and girls are those for soft drinks and food. Thereafter striking gender differences emerge; boys state a preference for ads for beer, Electricity Shares, British Satellite Broadcasting and Hamlet cigars. These ads share popular soundtracks with humourous male characters. The most popular ad of all among girls is the ad for LA Gear which features Michael Jackson followed by the Gillette and Levi 501 ads. All these ads feature male characters whom the girls find attractive. The attractiveness of male characters in ads is perhaps one of the most prominent criteria of appeal for girls but is ignored by boys.

The majority of ads which are found to be appealing concern products aimed at satisfying basic human, and especially, bodily requirements. Girls appear to be more susceptible to TV ads than boys as evidenced in their significantly higher response rate to the questionnaire. The vast majority of girls considered that ads soft drinks jeans, trainers, face, hair and body products are targeted at them compared with significantly fewer boys. It may be that rather than reflecting any entrenched differences in perceptions of ads that boys are much more reluctant to express opinions about things they like for fear of appearing 'uncool' whereas among girls it is quite acceptable to exhibit enthusiasm and express admiration. Such gender differences in expressiveness may extend into survey context where despite the fact that the questionnaires were completed individually and mostly in silence the pressure of peers prevails.

Finally, boys have much greater spending power and receive more pocket money than girls. This is partly due to the differential treatment and higher status of boys in most families and partly due to the fact that boys live and socialise to a much greater extent in public than girls. Girls material requirements on a day to day basis are generally seen to be satisfied within the domestic context. Boys are allowed more freedom and have greater opportunities for pursuing part-time employment and thus are able to earn more outside the home than girls. There is also a tendency for boys to compete with each other for status through material resources. Such gender differences in available resources and access to public life may further help to explain the seemingly greater susceptibility of girls to TV ads because what is seen to be denied in terms of material resources becomes more desirable.

APPENDIX 5.2 EXTRACTS FROM TRANSCRIPTS OF DISCUSSIONS ON TV ADS AND OF STUDENT'S WRITTEN SCRIPTS ON RELEVANT ADS

This appendix includes a number of extracts from the transcripts of discussions about TV ads as well as excerpts from written scripts on particular ads. CPVE students produced short essays on ads as part of an assignment. They allow a different kind of insight into young people's perceptions of TV ads. Most of these were done from memory in the classroom situation and bear some similarities to the way young people talk about ads, although their ad talk is usually more elliptical since much ad knowledge is taken for granted in peer discussions.

5.21 GENERAL DISCUSSION OF ADS

The following exchange is an extract from a longer discussion in the media studies classroom which gives an idea of the nature and quality of ad talk. The group begin by discussing the LA Gear ad [...]

G- with Michael Jackson as a pop star it sort of like brought business up really huh

F- they (LA Gear trainers) have sold a lot cos fans idolise him and want to buy whatever he wears

I- because the trainers have got his initials on them and the song is recognised and very popular

S- it's mainly aimed at teenagers cos they're mainly into trainers, they're setting a new trend

J- Also because LA Gear are in big competition with Nike so by using Michael Jackson they can take business away from them

I- it makes the trainers seem very glamorous, it also glamorises Michael Jackson - maybe too much - it's all about him, there's too much of his ego

S- but that's his style, people want to see as much of him as possible

G- everything fits in so well together; the pop star, the beat, the trainers, the setting

S- I liked the ending when his neice came on

I- that's cos they want to try to make it appeal to all ages even 5 year olds

S- you don't often see very young kids in ads
I- you do in the Vosene one - it's mainly adults they show washing their hair - so it makes it more interesting I think when they use young people
J- I wouldn't buy Vosene, it has too much of a squeaky-clean image
F- (laughs) it's not his kind of image, it's too antiseptic for you hey? He probably uses 'Wash and Go'
J- No, actually I prefer beer shampoo (all laugh)
F- have you seen the latest Tenant's ad when the alien comes along, the guy says 'it's good but not that good' (all laugh)
J-yeah I like that one cos most ads only show the very best side of a product but in that one they're not afraid to say that it's not worth risking your life for it
R-plus they're a sort of fantasy side to it - it's not a simple ad, it's got a science fiction element to it, but mostly beer ads have only men in them, women should get more involved in them
S- that would be one way of improving them
women find those types of ads boring cos they're not actually involved in them
I- yeah the beer ads really get to women cos they're not in them
S-even though women do drink beer
J- there are some ads now that show women drinking beer
R- I don't like the way they use cartoon characters it could have a bad influence on children
J- they might be interested in the ads but that doesn't mean that they're gonna go out and buy beer
S- I like the Carlsberg ads I think they're funny but that doesn't mean that I'm gonna go out and buy beer
R- women usually drink champagne in ads they don't really drink beer
S- they do
R- but what they do is to advertise to the majority of consumers who use a product there's no point in aiming beer ads at women
F- well, I think it's sexist
I- beer is put across as a man's drink whereas champagne and liqueurs are not so 'hard' and they use a raunchy approach
S- but if you go into a pub you see women drinking ther

I- but that's the pub not the advertisement!

Sh- I hate drink and I hate the ads for it

F- it's like in the Fairy ads it's always women washing up

S- but it's not true that only women wash dishes - men actually do those jobs so they should show them as well that's why they're sexist

J- but females do mostly wash up the dishes don't they?

S- we should do a survey to find out how many boys wash up in Asian and western culture

before, men just used to go to the pub and women stayed at home or just went next door but now they share jobs- more women go out to work

F- I think it's a stereotype thats being portrayed to us that women always wash dishes now a lot of men can't get jobs and saty at home and look after the baby and do the housework

S- yeah, that's true [...]

5.22 LA GEAR AD WITH MICHAEL JACKSON

The following extract is from the written script of 16 year old boy called Pritesh. This account challenges the survey data which suggests that girls find this ad more appealing than boys. His account highlights how the ad works on young people's knowledge the star's image and how it uses the 'power' of Michael Jackson to transfer his 'magical' qualities to the product.

"This advert is about a mega superstar, Michael Jackson promoting a new make of casual sports trainers called LA Gear.

LA gear is aimed at mid-teenagers and above, for those who like to wear sports shoes with a casual look. One reason I think this is because of the price £50-£80. There wouldn't be many 13/14 year olds walking down the street in such expensive trainers. Another reason is that boys of that age haven't yet realised that trainers like LA Gear, Adidas, Nike and Reebok are very trendy and 'bad' as many like to put it.

Boys, to make the market more specific, are the main consumers of these types of shoes. They must make up something like 99% of the sports shoe market. Girls who do buy trainers usually spend in the region of about £15-£20. They don't see the need to splash out on really expensive

trainers when you are more or less paying for the name/logo of the company. They don't feel as if they have to compete and have the best trainers on their street which gives us another point male ego. This is basically what it comes down to;-teenage boys competing with each other on the sole basis alone-to keep up with style and have the latest design. It won't impress girls because most of them won't recognise and be familiar with them or they simply wouldn't care. Once boys are over a certain age, say 22 or get married they too, like the girls don't see the need anymore or feel they have outgrown what is mainly a teenage market. So a more exact market would be 15-22 year old boys/men.

LA Gear have brought out a new type of sports shoe that are made to look casual. Many boys may like the idea of this new range and decide to give them a go and with Michael Jackson prompting them they really can't go wrong. With some adverts who introduce an important face they don't always work because people usually remember the face and forget what they are advertising for. With LAGear however, because the ad is a joy to watch if you asked anyone after the ad is shown what it was Michael Jackson was promoting LA gear would no doubt come to mind.

: This advert would sell LA Gear on the power of Michael Jackson alone seeing as he has so many fans around the world (wider market) but the advert is really well done. It is pleasing and entertaining to watch with Michael showing off his dancing abilities. The scenes and colours of the background are soothing to the eyes and there's something about them which makes them very welcoming - stark and soft shades of black with Michael acting as a spotlight in the dark. The way I think LAGear want people to greet this advert is sort of like 'the power of Michael Jackson combined with the magic of LAGear captured momentarily in a few seconds of bliss'

The advert is slickly executed and should really launch LAGear as a major force in sports shoes. So Adidas and Nike Brace yourselves for some tough competition promoted by plastic pop star Michael Jackson".
(Pritesh, 16 year old boy)

5.23 ADS FOR JEANS

The following three accounts are taken from the written scripts of three 16 year old boys on their favourite ads

LEVIS 501

"My favourite ad is the Levi 501 ad where a young guy is wearing 501 jeans and he comes along with his scruffy dog he takes his jeans off and goes for a swim. he neatly folds his jeans and places them under a palm tree on the sand while he goes for a swim the dog guards his jeans. then a young lady in a bikini comes along sees his jeans, picks them up and puts them on at first the dog does nothing but then as she starts to walk away he starts pulling at them when the guy arrives back and sees this beautiful girl he praises his dog for letting the woman put on the jeans and then the girl and guy go off together

The ad is telling you if you buy 501 jeans and you have a clever, bright, crafty mongrel, you're likely to attract all the women and end up with a beautiful young lady".

(Raj, 16 year old boy)

"This guy walks into a bar wearing 501's he wants to play pool he puts his hands in his pocket but realises that he's got no money. It's set in America in a snooker hall. This old guy points to his jeans with his pool cue so they play each other for his jeans. They play pool and the young one wins. Next thing you see is the old guy with no trousers on standing there in his dirty boxers.

This, like other Levi ads are pretty memorable. It probably appeals to girls more than boys because the guy is a bit of a hunk. He's playing pool and wins but he's not trying to act at all 'bad'. He's like a hero, he doesn't want to take the money off the old geezer he just says "take your pants off" and shames him up a bit. The woman fantasizing over the counter about the guy probably helps too so the girls probably think 'safe! he's all right!'.
'safe! he's all right!'.
(Devinder, 16 year old boy)

PEPE JEANS

"5-6 teenagers are sitting on the grass first they start laughing and then they start crying they are around 15-20 years old, they are wearing jeans, t-shirts and trainers they are looking at each other and then they start laughing even more and more. All the group come from different racial backgrounds e.g. Mexican, Spanish, American, British so the appeal is world wide. They laugh more and more and it shows them having a really good time as if it was their last day on this planet earth. They are touching each other and rolling all over the place. The basic message is laughing - crying - worldwide - no language - "Live everyday as if it were your last in Pepe Jeans".
(Jasbinder, 16 year old girl)

Below is an extract from a conversation (taken from fieldnotes) between three 16 year old girls where the same ad is discussed

b-there's this one that comes on in the cinema as well as TV and there's all these people laughing
g-oh yeah that's brilliant
b-but I don't see what it's got to do with Pepe jeans
g-it's like "live everyday like its your last, you know, wear Pepe jeans"
its brilliant I so love that ad I always end up cracking up with laughter
p-especially that fat guy sitting there rolling around, you should hear that yuppie laugh hu hu hu she can't even laugh properly that's what makes you laugh, the way they laugh

CHIEP JEANS (Hip Hop style/black american)

"To start with the product is aimed at the younger generation. I'm talking about teenagers, seeing how nowadays they usually work and have a little cash on the side by doing a number of different things to earn it. Most teenagers like looking good, like me, and are fussy about what they wear but most people who have an eye for fashion know that CHIEP is a unique name in garments.

The ad starts with a boy with a ghetto blaster sitting in a hall by himself. The boy is sleeping with his cassette player on a couch in a hall. As he is sleeping two black boys arrive into the hall wearing Chipie Jeans. They see the boy is sleeping so the black boy goes over and plays a cassette which happens to be a rap song which he likes. the two black boys start dancing and as they do the other boy wakes up and is just amazed at the clothes they are wearing and the dance routine. Finally at the end the boy stops the music and then the two black boys look at each other and laugh. Then a sign comes up 'CHIPIE - Have you discovered it?"

(Ravinder, 16 year old boy)

5.24 GENERAL DISCUSSION OF ADS

The following extracts are taken from a discussion of TV ads among five 16 year old A-level female students. I asked them to talk about the ads they liked. I was present at the discussion but made no interventions in it. It highlights the elliptical nature of their ad talk and their shared knowledge of the ads in question. It also demonstrates the way in which status in the peer group can be achieved by remembering and retelling a popular and funny ads. This serves a similar function to joke telling. Indeed, young people also draw upon ads as a source of comic material in their everyday interactions. Furthermore, the culturally distinctive reservoirs of ad knowledge is also highlighted.

[...]

a- I usually switch over when the ads come on

b- it depends

a- I ignore em

p- We play games you have to guess what the product is before they mention it, you get 10 points, it's hard but when you get familiar with them it's all right I suppose

g- it's hard cos in the long ones they take their time before they mention the product

p- like that new Persil one, there's a new arrival, and you're thinking babies, no, it's Persil in a smaller pack

q- so you wouldn't be able to say easily if you didn't know already

b- I don't really watch the ads, it depends, I watch the jeans ads
g- I love the 501 ads
p- when they play pool (all croon and giggle)
b- I don't watch that many I only watch my favourite ones, like Pampers and Gillette
p- proper studs in them (all laugh)
b- the baby and the car one
a- the Vauxhall one
yeah
a- he runs up to a car and the kids...
b- PG Tips, the one where they're digging the channel tunnel and come up in another monkey's house and he goes "oh have you got PG Tips in France?" and she says, "you're still in England!"
[...]
g- what about the ads on videos?
p- oh my God, theyre so sick
b- that man he comes in all of them and he's always with a new woman isn't he
g- I hate him
a- he's sick
p- there's this really fat lady in the park and shes walking really slowly, waddling and he follows her because he likes her cardigan and he wants to ask her where she got her cardigan its an Indian video ad [...]
b- Oh the spotted dick one, you know, the one where his wife tries out a new fast food and he says "what is that?" (Indian accent) and she says "it's spotted dick"
p- its not that bad his indian accent
g- his is OK but I hate that one where the Indian man walks round to this shop to get beds and they go flying up into the sky on a carpet (chorus - oh yeah_
a- its that same bloke hanna
the Green Hire Centre one as well
p- He lives in Southall, he makes all the ads, he stars in them all
b- has he got a moustache?
a- no, he's fat though
p- he's with a different woman in each one

and a different scene in each one, like, in one he's a gangster, in another one he's Ali Baba, in another one he's a flute player, in another one he's a 'buddha' (a priest) and he takes these women to sari centres and buys them saris and then to the jewellers and buys them gold b- he even takes English women with him

[..]

p- I like that one national power (sings) she has got the power and then theres 'The Snap' music

j- and The Startrek ones, what is it National Power and they're trying to beam Scottie back back to earth but they've got different

a- they're more clever, the way they're put together, I think they're aimed at a different.. older people

g- yeah I usually get them first time but there are some obscure ones like the women and the earring squeaking

g- I hate that

a- you don't get it until you think about it and then you see that man

a- I like that ad where the dog kisses the cat and the cat kisses the mouse

yeah

g- Yeah all the baby and animal ones are really sweet and there's factual ones like the Volvo one and the cages

p- then there's the IKEA one, that man comes with the

b- "I wanna see you in court", that's a stupid advert

p- yeah I hate that silly man

j- There are those child benefit ones and they're so weird she goes

b- the Aids ones are really good

g- its a blank screen and she goes, "it's 5 years before I found out I was HIV positive, I never thought I had to use a condom", and afterward they say "This is not the voice of an actress this is Denise, 25, heterosexual and an Aids sufferer"

b- they only say it at the end

a- there was this one for mates condoms this couple went into a park (laughs)

b- there's this Indian one (laughing) for condoms and it's just this light going on and off on and off and it just says condom ad..theres a couple in bed innit and

a- you know excitement
p- have you seen the Naturel ad? that's one freaky ad
g- we were watching 'Three Men and a Baby' and that one came on and it goes it's extra big and we thought
p- they're being chased by wolves and they have paint on them, no clothes just paint on them
p- I like that Acorn commercial you know the meat substitute
g- I like that one "We wanna go out a little bit"
p- "I wanna go out a lot"
(chorus - oh yeah)
b- "I wanna go to college"
p- "We wanna be together"
what's that one? Prudential, yeah, "whatever you wanna be, be with Prudential"
a- what's that one?
b- the one where the fat woman says "I wanna be a size 12"
g- and the twins going "I wanna be different"
b- "I wanna be like a tree"
(chorus - "I wanna be a tree! I wanna be free!")
b- they're good those are...what about the one with the couple sitting there and he's a right lout
"wuhh we wanna be married wuhh" (all laugh at her imitation of him)
g- and at the end he goes "We wanna be together" and she says "all-alone"
a- what about BT, you know, the one when she opens the fridge and she goes, "well, I haven't got anything in" and the fridge is packed
p- I like all of them they're brilliant
a- cos Beattie she doesn't want...
b- when she goes to buy a washing machine and she goes it hasn't been booked by so and so (all laugh)
p- when she phones her grandson and says "I'm making you a cake", and like, he's got his exam results and she goes, "Congratulations", and he goes "but I failed" and she goes, "well you've got an ology you're a scientist"
g- we all go "so you're a scientist!"
it's so funny, it's brilliant cos you know that she's gonna do something

silly

a- its like a soap opera its like the car ones

g- and the Nescafe ones as well

a- the car ones they're all aimed at posh people with money and you know, like us kids, like we can't identify with that we can't buy cars, we can't buy phones or anything but it's more funny it's sorts of family based

j- she behaves like an old Indian woman

a- she's really typical of what you'd expect

j- really devoted to her son Melvin and everything

b- she phones him, "Oh, Melvin! aren't you coming round for your sandwich?", "Oh no mum, it's all right" and she goes "Oh all right I don't mind Melvin but what do you want in your sandwich?"

a- and now she's said that she's getting him a cardigan cos he's working in an office

a- yeah she worries about him

it's a Jewish family and they're really close it's like Indian families

j- its different to other ads

a- its like the Oxo ads

j- they don't come on anymore

a- cos they follow on

g- they do

p- when they go on holiday,

g- there is

b- when we're engaged

b- late at night

that's a brilliant one

oh yeah yeah

p- (sings - "Tonight's the Night, I've waited for ..."

a- and she comes home in the rain and she's all wet

b- and he thought it's tonight, the night, know what I mean?

a- what about the Gold Blend ones

b- they're boring - I mean - when are they gonna do it?

a- he's kissed her now

p- yeah hes kissed her

b- took him long enough

g- have you seen the Ovaltine Light one? Remember that kiss? it was the longest kiss ever on TV

p- that was, you know, the one when her mascara starts to run and the steam starts rising (singing) Romeo and Juliet

g- I remember I heard about it on the radio - it said "get ready for the longest kiss, you know, so I did

b- what's the one where there are three yuppified kids and they're having this milk shake

(chorus - oh yeah yeah yeah)

b- and they're talking about their future, it's never too early to start saving

p- no, what about the Walkers Crisps one - "I wanna a job, I wanna be up there doing

(Chorus - that's brilliant!"

all his friends wannabe like brain surgeon and executive prime minister, politician and it turns out he wants to be a quality controller for Walker's crisps

g- the Coke ads are brilliant (all singing along)

a- "Coke is it!"

b- "you can't beat the feeling!"

a- "it's the real thing!"

b- its cos theyre American and

p- all the guys are so

a- I think the Pespi ads are good but I don't like Pepsi, I like coke better

[..]

a- the ads made in India and in Southall they're the same the one's here they lack sophistication, they're just straight into the product they don't think about what they're doing

b- what about that one with Farah (Indian movie actress)

a-oh she looked horrible in that one

p-oh yeah she looked quite chubby in that one but sometimes they have some wicked clothes ads on one's from Bombay, they show couples who are like really westernised, like in the Double Bull range of clothes, there's some really wicked ads really wicked suits and that, from boutiques in Bombay, very nice saris, the women look good

a- but they dont say anything

p- well at least they don't say anything stupid

there's the one with that old actress Zina Tamaan and her husband, you know, two successful people, working-out, feeding their dogs, doing this, doing that, having dinner and after their success and all that, they're advertising a like a tobacco chewing thing I thought haan! [...]

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER SIX

TV COMEDY

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APPENDIX CHAPTER 6

This appendix includes excerpts from transcriptions and details of jokes that were in circulation at the time of fieldwork to support the data presented in the TV comedy chapter.

ON JOKES AND JOKING

Below is a discussion in a mixed gender group of 16 year old A-level students

H- If you've never joked with a person then what kind of relationship have you got with them

B- but there are some people you would never joke with

H- and there's some people you would never tell certain jokes to, that is, if you don't want your head kicked in

S- But some humour is more like bullying than anything else, especially people who aren't too bright

H- I can't stand someone who won't stand up for themselves, you know, those people who are quiet and just come in to school and sit there and don't socialise

S- those people really get the micky taken out of them and they get woffed on

H-I hate it when they don't say anything back

S- it's mainly people in lower sets, I'm not being cruel but they're really quite thick, they won't talk, they're like doormats and they get picked upon

H-A level people take the mick out of CPVE people as well

I take the micky out of anyone who won't stand up for themselves

S-but then if you do argue with them it just comes out that you're more clever than they are, that you use your brain

H-I take the piss out of X badly

S-but not to her face cos shes a bully herself, in this school people think they can just take the piss all the time, it gets you down though, it's not right

"PUT-DOWN" HUMOUR

Appearance -

"you get the piss taken out of you if short or tall, thin or fat, or about your clothes, if they're not fashionable, they'll call you a 'pendus' (peasant) or a 'paki'"

(Dipi, 16 year old girl)

-"the way people dress tells you about them their social class, in this school everyone will wear smart or casual clothes but nothing too flamboyant, otherwise they'll you to your face and make a joke of it and at times it's really cruel especially to those people who want to be individual or to stand out

like they could make people cry, take it to an extreme about their hair style or something

(Manjit, 16 year old girl)

Skin colour

The following jokes were told by three 16 year old Sikh boys

"What's the difference between a dead paki and a dead rat on the motorway? There's more skid marks on a paki"

"Why do choc-ices have silver wrappings?

So that blacks and pakis don't bite their fingers"

"What do you call a black person standing by a radiator?
Hot chocolate"

"How do you drown a nigger?

Pop his lips"

"I love the racist ones as well

what do you call a balck man in a sports car?
a thief"

Name jokes

a) among friends

Surinder - surinderella married a fella

Ranjit - Roger Ramjit

Gurvinder Bhachu - Bhachu Achu

Sadaf - sod off!

Mita Vakaria - vodka or Bakeria

Saira -ford Sierra

b) locally (these are common jokes in Southall told by all)

what do you call a one legged Sikh? Balance Singh

what do you call a Sikh electrician? Cable Singh

And his wife? Bijlee (electricity)

And his son? Ashock

what do you call a man living between 2 houses? Ali

what do you call a fast lady? Tej Kaur (Tej means fast)

what do you call a pakistani with a ham on his head

Mo - ham - head

Jokes about 'Asians'

"we feel safe, we're protected in Southall by people of our own colour but if there were more white people, they have got different beliefs, so we need people the same as yourself to support and protect you"

(Naser, 16 year old boy)

'If an Asian tells an Asian joke nobody gets put down' (Paramjit, 16 year old girl)

An Englishman and an Asian are on an Air India plane. The Indian man is drinking Lassi (a yoghurt drink). The Englishman says 'what's that?' and the Indian man replies 'drink India'. The Indian man then eats a parontha (bread) and again the Englishman asks, 'what is it?' and he replies 'food India' and then the Indian man farts and the Englishman

asks 'what is it?'and he says 'Air India'.
(Farida, 16 year old girl)

An Englishman, A Scottish man and Indian man.

The scottish man throws his whisky out the window and the Englishman asks why he did that and he replies, 'there's plenty more where that came from'.

The Englishman then throws his cigarette out the window and the Indian man asks why he did that and he replies, 'there's plenty more whee that came from' .

Then an Irishman comes along and throws the Indian man out of the window and says 'there plenty more where they came from" (Naser, 16 year old Pakistani boy)

On TV I saw these girls go by in Indian suits and the English people said 'only prostitutes wear clothes like Asian women and girls. I found that offensive
(Gita, 16 year old girl)

"In Southall we take the piss out of people who live in India and those that dress up as 'pure' religious people, they get put down a lot in Southall"
(Ranjit, 16 year old boy)

"we take the piss out of 'pendus' their clothes, their appearance, the way speak, they're not like us"
(Ravinder, 16 year old girl)

"women drivers get badly slagged off in Southall but I don't blame people they're awful"
(parmjit, 16 year old boy)

what did the prostitute say to her knickers?
Come on down! the price is right!
(Baljit, 16 year old boy)

Family

"it's mainly the mother in laws and daughter in laws that get the piss taken out of them"
(16 year old girl)

Gossips

"we hate gossips, like Hilary and Dot Cotton, we call them Mangles, after Mrs. Mangle"
(16 year old girl)

Religion

"Muslims, are most put down in Southall, especially since the Gulf"
(16 year old boy)

Iraqi jokes

What's the difference between a piece of toast and an Iraqi? You can make soldiers out of Iraqis

What do you call an Iraqi take away? Scud - U - Like

Have you heard the one about Saddam's new condom?
it's for pricks who won't withdraw

Whats the difference between a Saudi soldier and an Iraqi soldier?
The scud marks in his pants

"Sikhs are made fun of by Hindus and Muslims especially for wearing turbans"

A Sikh man goes to the grocer store and as he's leaving the shop keeper says
"Goodbye and I hope your head gets better soon"

Jehovas Witness

"Peter was a JW they were cruel to him, he wouldn't mix, he would stand alone, separated, he was a different colour to us, no-one would talk to

him and people made fun of him all the time
(Naser, 16 year old Muslim boy)

Caste

"Only with close friends can you laugh at caste, people don't like to venture out of their caste, also in marriage you have to get married to a certain caste and those jokes reinforce stereotypes about other castes so there won't be any different caste marriages
(Rajinder, 16 year old boy)

White people

(known as 'honkies' and 'goris')

"white people are racist so why can't we be racist back? we're just as bad as they are really"

(Ranjit, 16 year old girl)

"They're mainly put down by using Punjabi to insult them secretly"

Foreigners

"people from another country are slagged off and made fun of"

Indians

"pendus, thats us in Southall who stereotype these people like we do Pakis and Gujeratis, people in Southall are stereoytpled too there so much racism between castes and between religions as well and they all wanna stay different as well and these different people take things differently"

(16 year old gir)

West Indians/Blacks

what do you call a black person standing next to a radiator?
Black chocolate

Irish

"the Irish are joked about for being stupid, drunk or navvies"

Pakistanis

"They get put down most by Sikhs in Southall also the way their women wear black clothes and look ugly"

"your parents are always telling you to stay away from Muslim men especially, they say they only want you for one thing. My mother reckons it comes from back in India when Muslims sold Sikh women so there are plenty of jokes about Pakistani men, you always hear of Muslim men running away with Sikh girls and parents put them down to scare you"

"they're known as half-cuts because of circumcision and people make jokes about them being half as effective in bed"

"Abi came into the 6th form weilding a pair of scissors and says to the boys "who wants to change their religion?"
everyone just cracked up

"they're not even proper jokes just saucy jokes about Muslim men being randy I think it's because they are allowed to have several wives and marry their cousins which most Sikhs find disgusting"

A blind rabbit and a blind skunk meet up and bump into eachother

"what are you doing, are you blind?" said the skunk

"as a matter of fact I am blind" said the rabbit

"So am I ", says the skunk

"Well", says the rabbit "touch me up and tell me what I am?"

So he feels his long ears and bushy tail and says

"you're a rabbit!"

The rabbit then feels the skunk's grease and notices he smells like shit

"oh! you're a paki" says the rabbit

Gujeratis,

"smelly women jokes and skinny men jokes also Patel jokes about owning corner shops"

Bengalis

"about being poor and dark skinned"

Rural/Urban

"Punjabi Jats tell jokes about low-caste city-dwelling 'chamars' and East African, urban, Ramgharia Sikhs tell jokes about Jat peasants being thick, uneducated, uncivilised"

Language

"Indians aren't the only ones with accents, everyone has an accent but they (whites) tend to make more jokes out of us"

Accent

"Birmingham and Liverpool accents"

People with deformities

"spastic, cripple, flake-face"

People who exert authority

teachers

why do teachers have cross-eyes?

because they cant control their classes

quiet/shy people

"people who say stupid things that don't make sense 'thick' people"

"I make jokes out of x cos she's dumb, we all do and I know it's cruel but somehow when youre friends are around you can't help it"

cruel humour

"Young people use a lot of Punjabi words to joke like "teri ma do foodi" and "sali goori", words which are harsh and aimed to hurt others just so that some people can make themselves 'bad' and 'hard'"

"What do you call 2 Ethiopians covered in a blanket?

Twin Twix Pack"

racist and sexist jokes

Among friends it is considered acceptable to laugh at racist and sexist jokes

"At one time or another we are all experience racist or sexist remarks some ignore the fact but with other we tend to get weak"

(Gita)

Jokes which are degrading to females are told among females but never or rarely to a boy

"Somehow a girl telling a sexist joke is somehow justifiable simply because of their gender whereas a boy telling the same joke would be considered sexist in degrading women. This seems like an inverted sexism in supposedly feminist times"

(Narinder, 16 year old boy)

"some programmes seem to make fun out of us it's as if we don't know how to behave or we have no manners, the message gets through more effectively through comedy and white people's ignorance is winning through"

(Deepak, 16 year old boy)

"I felt insulted by and angry at the racist jokes of Bernard Manning but most of all I pity those in his audience who laughed so simply, they must be ignorant and stupid to sit there and laugh at this pathetic man talking total crap. All racists are ignorant they lack knowledge of the different cultures and religions that's what makes them racist nothing else!"

(Ranjit, 16 year old girl)

Comediens are seen to play an important part in re-inforcing stereotypes "they have contact with the public whereas individuals don't they tell them what they think of different social groups"

'dirty jokes

"I think joking is part of growing up, in a way you've got to joke and laugh to get on, if you were serious all the time people would find you

boring"

(Lipi, 16 year old girl)

A mother has son called Will and they live in a house called 'Hairy Bum'. The mother loses child and goes to police saying "Officer I've lost my willy and I've looked all over my hairy Bum and I can't find him anywhere"

(Ravinder, 16 year old girl)

Boys use 'dirty humour' to wind girls up

"you think I'm dirty anyway so I might as well live up to that image"

(Abi, 16 year old boy to group of girls)

"Which of you girls have the biggest tits? (met with outrage by girls as the boys were awarding marks on 10 to girls for different parts of their bodies)

"Girls do not tell as many 'dirty-dirty' jokes as boys (at least not in front of boys) they don't want to hear them because they use them to put you down you know they're always about female private parts but girls do tell dirty jokes about men's private parts"

"A is vulgar, big headed, and he tells dirty jokes because he thinks he will attract girls' attention. He thinks girls love him, he comes along grabbing his dick and saying 'come and get it girls' and we laugh, but we laugh at him, he's so stupid, he doesn't seem to realise that everyone laughs at him even his so- called mates"

B tells dirty jokes but is respected he's seen as intelligent, attractive and because he's 'dating' one of the girls in the group is seen as more sexually experienced than most boys. He can 'get away' with telling the 'crudest jokes I've ever heard

people you never joke with

"I told my sister' mother-in-law a joke and she took it really offensive

I said it was just a joke and she didn't believe me she thought it was true [...] older Indian people take things so literally they can't understand your sense of humour so I don't bother anymore" (Farida)

"I never joke with boys" (Nadia)

ritual joking

"This is associated with weddings, for example, the jokes played upon the groom's side, like putting chillies into his cup of tea, not letting him enter the house to take his bride, stealing the entire family's and their guests shoes during the wedding ceremony".

Such joking relationships relate to Radcliffe Brown's idea about how they help manage potentially difficult alliances. Joking is a means by which the bride's family can balance the relationship with the groom's side (the relationship between groom and bride's family being inequitable) It is also a symbolic means of communicating the reluctance of the family to let the bride go thereby giving her status as someone who is cherished by her family. Wedding videos are particularly interesting in this sense since such jokes are visibly displayed to all.

"At weddings there's loads and loads of humour but you have to ...like the two families that get together have to accept that it's just a laugh and not take it too seriously, it's light humour, it's quite an emotional situation so it relieves the moment. In a way it's getting to know people, they tell each other jokes to see how they react and if they both tell jokes then they can get on really well but there's always a limit to how far you can go with jokes. You don't want to overdo it. (Seema, 16 year old girl)

This type of joking is extended into family relationship the newly married male is licensed to joke with his wife's younger sister. The 'Babi' in her new home can joke with her husband's younger brothers. But neither may do so with the spouse's older siblings. This is an attempt to instigate and establish 'intimacy' with the in-laws who are designated to become 'as family', as brothers and sisters. What better

way of trying to initiate such rapports than by joking and teasing relationships? The exclusion of the older siblings and parent's in law from this joking relationships serves to establish the distance that 'respect' demands. Thus it can be seen that within the newly married family context the tension between intimacy and antagonism is often resolved by humour and joking relationships.

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TV SOAPS

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SOAP SURVEY

Who was surveyed?

The sample consisted of 40 girls and 40 boys aged 16-17 .

They are all members of the 6th. form in a Southall High School, following either CPVE (58) or A Level courses (22).

52 are Sikh, 16 are Muslim and 12 are Hindu.

1. What's your favourite soap opera?

	females	males	total
Neighbours	26	24	50
Home and Away	11	4	15
Eastenders	2	1	3
Dallas	0	7	7

2. Who else in your family or among friends likes it?

	females	males	total
Friends/school	18	10	28
Mother	17	7	24
Younger brother	17	16	33
Younger sister	14	13	27
Female cousins	11	11	22
Friends/street	11	5	16
Male cousins	10	8	18
Older sister	9	7	16
Father	7	6	13
Older brother	4	5	9
Grandmother	3	6	9

3. Who do you usually watch it with?

	females	males	total
Mother	18	5	23
Younger sister	15	14	29
Younger brother	15	16	31
Older Sister	10	6	16
Female cousin	7	1	8
Father	9	6	15
Male cousin	5	2	7
Older Brother	5	6	11
Friend/school	3	1	4
Friend/street	3	4	7

4. Which soaps do other members of your family watch most?

	female respondents	male respondents	total
Neighbours	27	16	43
Home and Away	22	20	42
Eastenders	22	13	35
Dallas	17	11	28
Dynasty	6	4	10
Coronation st.	4	4	8
Brookside	2	2	4

5. Which soaps do your family discuss most?

	female respondents	male respondents	total
Neighbours	29	17	46
Home and Away	22	11	33
Eastenders	14	7	21
Dallas	5	8	13

6. Why do you think they discuss these most?

	female respondents	male respondents	total
realistic	23	11	34
social class	6	6	12
not true to life	1	11	13

7. Favourite soap according to nationality

	female respondents	male respondents	total
Australian: Neighbours	24	25	49
British: Eastenders	23	18	41
American: Dallas	19	15	34

8. Favourite Soaps when younger 12-14

	female respondents	male respondents	total
Neighbours	26	17	43
Eastenders	14	8	22
Dynasty	13	3	16
Dallas	12	7	19
Colbys	9	0	9
Brookside	6	2	8

9. What do you think is the favourite soap among girls 12-14 in this school at present?

	female respondents	male respondents	total
Neighbours	30	20	50
Home and Away	25	3	28
Eastenders	9	2	11
Dallas	8	1	9
Dynasty	3	1	4

10. What do you think is the favourite soap among boys 12-14 in this school at present?

	female respondents	male respondents	total
Neighbours	14	20	34
Eastenders	11	6	17
Home and Away	11	6	17
Dallas	6	2	8

11. What do you think makes girls and boys have different preferences?

"boys like macho, action programmes, they're not interested in the happenings that go on in families" (f)

"boys think soaps are for girls and don't like admitting to watching them, but Eastenders is more realistic and not soppy" (f)

"girls like soaps because they're full of good looking men like Henry and Jason, they like the actors and characters in them" (f)

"Girls like emotional stuff, sad stories and romance" (f)

"Girls like Neighbours, it's not as realistic as Eastenders which boys like" (f)

"boys tend to go out in the evening" (f)

"relating them to their problems" (f)

"They look for different things in programmes, boys look for action and guns and girls look for the soppy stuff" (m)

"girls like Neighbour's star Jason" (m)

12. What do you think makes families have different preferences?

	female respondents	male respondents	total
class	13	13	26
education	10	4	14
religion	9	4	13
parent's birthplace	5	7	12
relatives	4	3	7

13. Which soap do you think is the most expensive to produce?

	female respondents	male respondents	total
Dallas	29	17	46
Dynasty	23	10	33
Colbys	8	4	12

14. Which soap do you think is most popular among English working class families?

	female respondents	male respondents	total
Neighbours	18	10	28
Eastenders	18	8	26

15. Which soap do you think is most popular among English middle class families?

	female respondents	male respondents	total
Neighbours	10	15	25
Dallas	14	6	20

16. Which soap do you think is most popular among 'Asian' working class families?

	female respondents	male respondents	total
Neighbours	25	17	42
Eastenders	22	6	28

17. Which soap do you think is most popular among 'Asian' middle class families?

	female respondents	male respondents	total
Neighbours	19	19	36
Dallas	19	4	23
Eastenders	18	2	20

18. Which soap (if any) should go and why?

	female respondents	male respondents	total
Emmerdale Farm	26	19	45
The Young Doctors	11	7	18
Coronation Street	7	8	15

WHY?

criticisms of Emmerdale Farm:

"There are no exciting themes or stories in it and the actors aren't well known; they don't appear on adverts or on interviews like others" (f)

"I don't think many people are into cows and pigs and the goings-on at a farm also people LOOK more appealing in Dallas and other soaps than those people trudging around in anoraks and wellies" (f)

"old-fashioned, dull", "no romance", "it doesn't relate to how people live".
(f) "a waste of air time" (m) "irrelevant to the majority" (m)
"too slow and too old fashioned" (m)

criticism of the Young Doctors

"it's not on at a convenient time"

"it's the same as The Flying Doctors, it's just a repeat!"

Criticism of Coronation Street

"it's old, it's been on for too long and it's boring since some of the old characters have left and the new actors are no good"

19. From which soaps can you remember the last episode?

	female respondents	male respondents	total
Neighbours	31	24	55
Home and Away	23	10	33
Eastenders	15	8	13

20. From which soaps can you remember the title sequence?

	female respondents	male respondents	total
Neighbours	29	27	56
Home and Away	25	15	50
Eastenders	19	12	31
Dallas	14	12	26

21. Soaps show TOO MUCH:

	female respondents	male respondents	total
social problems	22	16	38
private family matters	23	15	38
family conflict	16	15	31
sadness	13	11	24
sex	11	3	14
family unity	9	9	18
happiness	8	3	11
crime	5	3	8
short-term drama	7	4	11

22. Soaps show TOO LITTLE:

	female respondents	male respondents	total
'Asians'	23	13	36
crime	13	9	22
violence	14	8	22
women's issues	14	2	16
sex	12	19	31
'other minorities'	10	5	15
politics	8	4	12

23. Qualities attributed to favourite female character?

	female respondents	male respondents	total
independent	23	8	31
not scared to try new things	21	6	27
pretty	21	15	36
does what she wants	20	9	29
intelligent	20	11	31
sociable	19	10	29
ambitious	18	10	28
fashionable	18	9	27
mature	17	10	27
fun loving	15	12	27
respectful to elders	14	5	19
modern	14	9	23
values family life	13	3	16
good job	12	7	19
romantic	11	11	22
she's like me	10	3	13
soft	9	8	17
feminine	8	17	25
loyal	8	6	14
hard	8	2	10
attractive	8	13	21
traditional	7	4	11
rebellious	7	3	10
not sexy	6	0	6
proud	5	4	9
dominant	5	0	5
rich	4	9	13
enjoys power over others	4	2	6
cold	3	2	5
sexy	3	20	23
modest	2	4	6
doesnt value family life	1	0	1
poor	0	0	0
immoral	0	0	0

24. Qualities attributed to favourite male character

	female respondents	male respondents	total
handsome	31	4	35
romantic	29	5	34
masculine	26	9	35
sexy	26	2	28
intelligent	24	5	29
fun-loving	21	12	33
attractive	21	3	24
sociable	20	8	28
does what he wants	20	12	32
not scared to try new things	19	6	25
fashionable	19	5	24
modern	17	5	22
mature	16	4	26
independent	15	7	22
ambitious	15	10	25
values family life	13	5	18
loyal	13	6	19
respectful to elders	12	5	17
has a good job	10	7	17
proud	9	6	15
soft	9	8	17
rich	6	4	10
enjoys having power over others	6	6	12
hard	5	6	11
dominant	5	4	9
doesn't value family life	5	3	8
traditional	4	0	4
modest	4	3	7
he's like me	4	2	6
rebellious	3	3	6
cold	2	3	5
not sexy	0	0	0
poor	0	0	0
immoral	0	0	0

25. Watching soaps is useful because

	female	male	total
they make me more open-minded	29	11	40
they help me forget my problems	20	10	30
they help me sort out my problems	17	8	25
they help me sort out right from wrong	17	7	24
they raise issues in my family that we wouldn't otherwise discuss	16	4	20
they make me want to change some of my values	12	2	14
they set good examples of behaviour to me	4	2	6

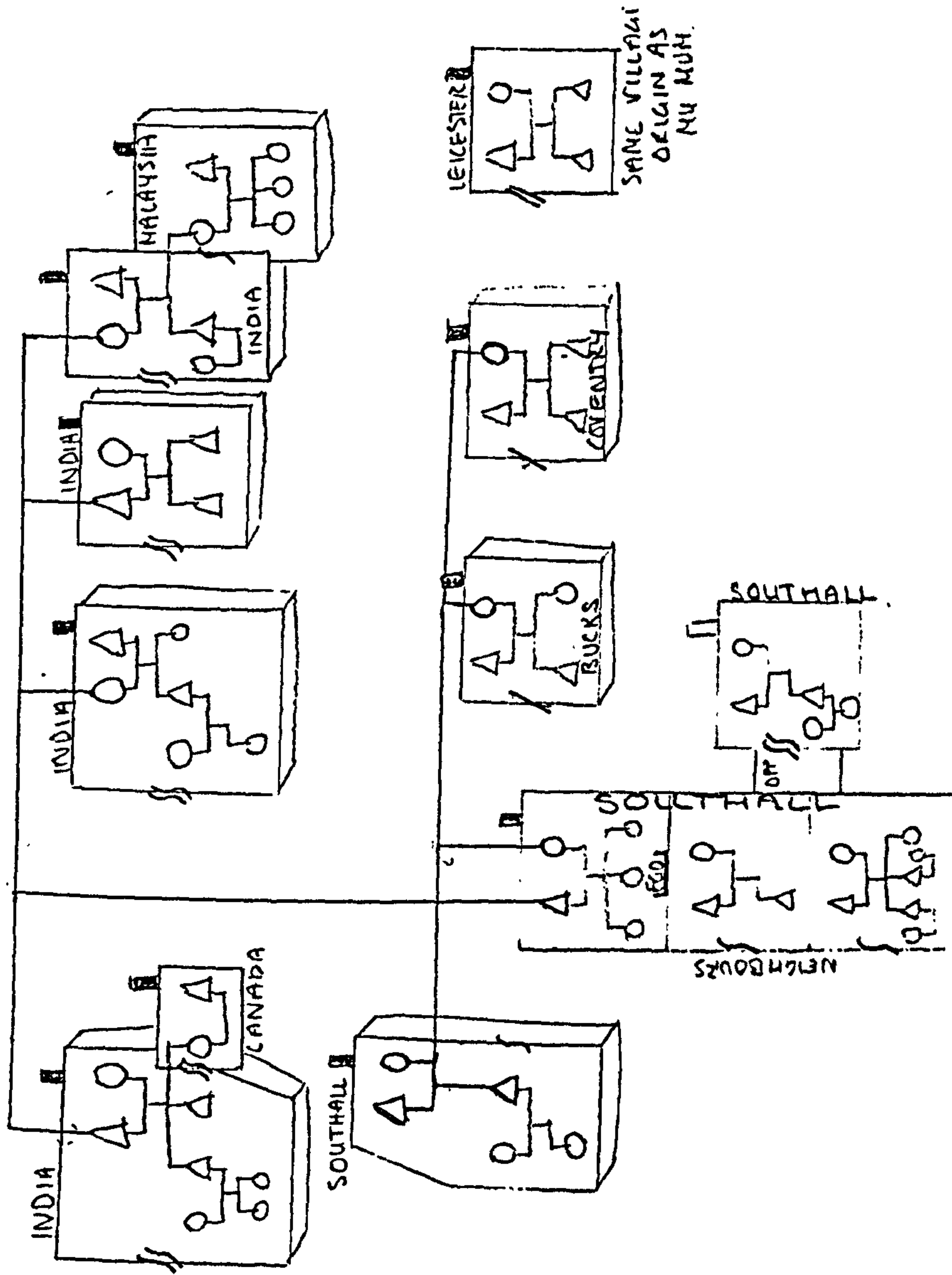
26. Watching soaps is NOT useful because

they don't relate to my problems	11	9	20
they don't raise any issues relevant to my family	10	7	17
they don't encourage the values I hold	9	4	13
they just make me escape from my problems	9	3	12
they encourage values opposite to those i hold	7	4	11
they set bad examples of behaviour to me	4	2	6
they make me want to hold onto my values	2	1	3

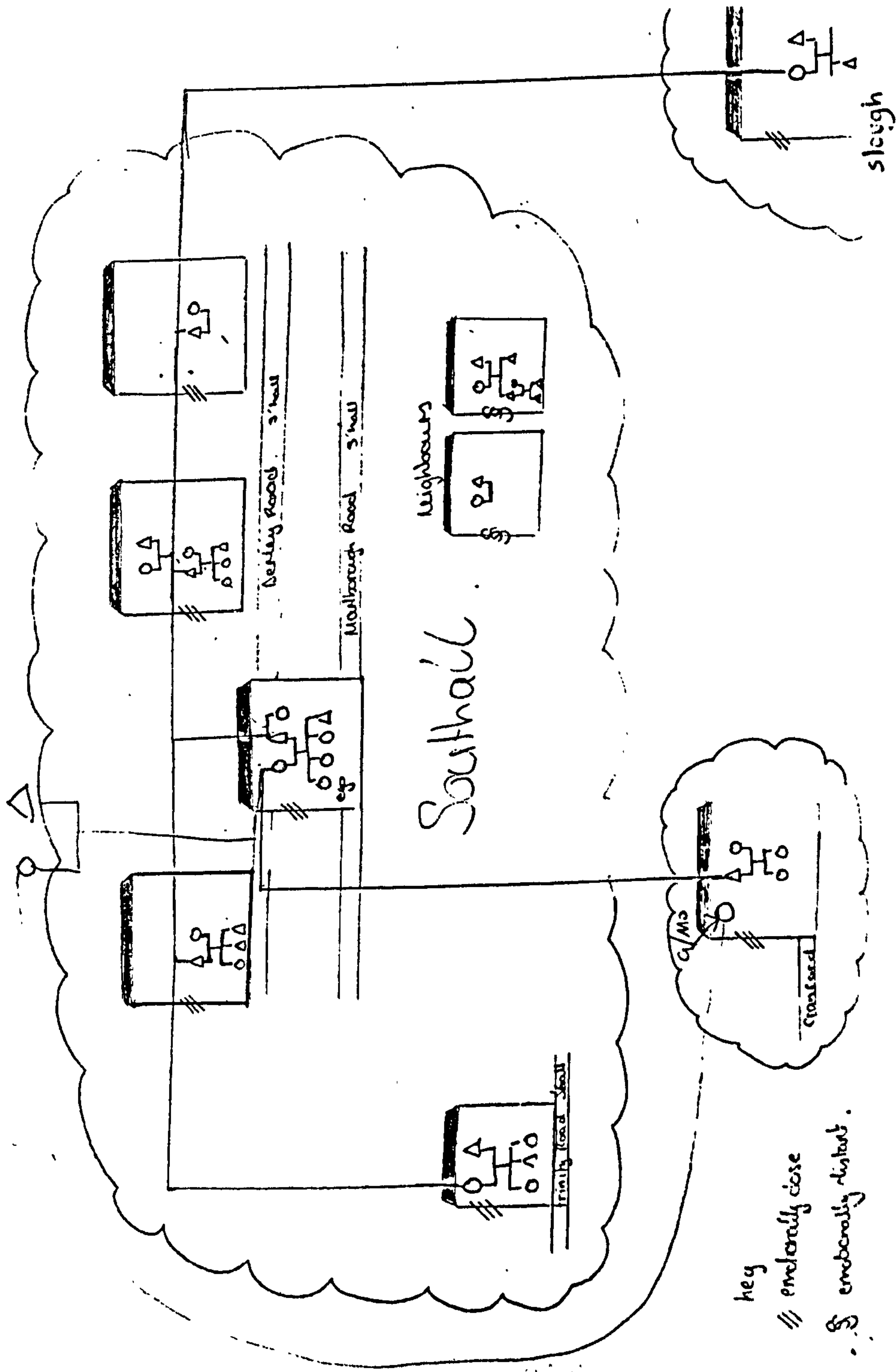
FAMILY AND KINSHIP NETWORK DIAGRAMS

Quinder T.

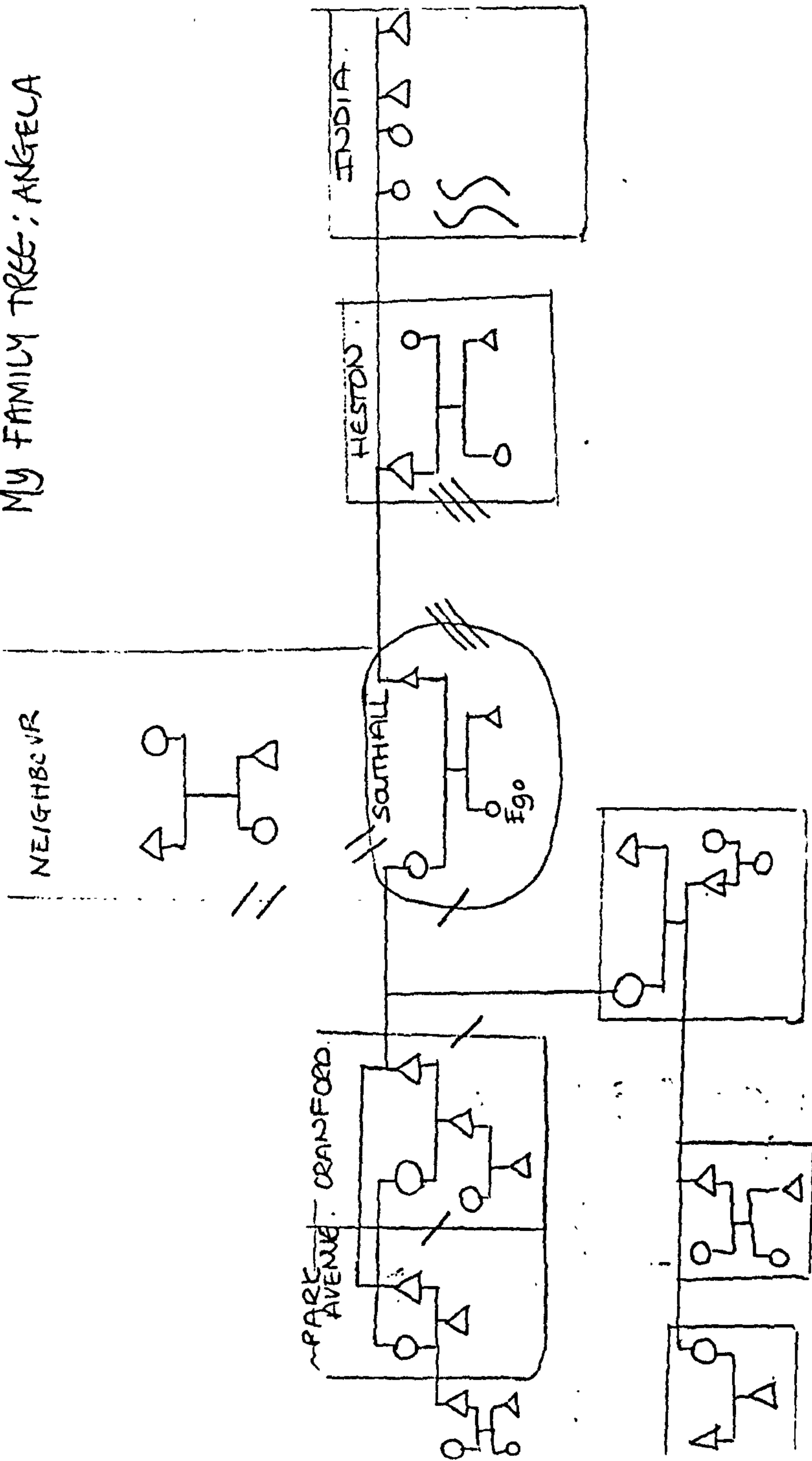
MY FAMILY TREE



KEY
 // rather close
 // close
 / v. close
 --- rather distant
 - - - - -



MY FAMILY TREE: ANGELA



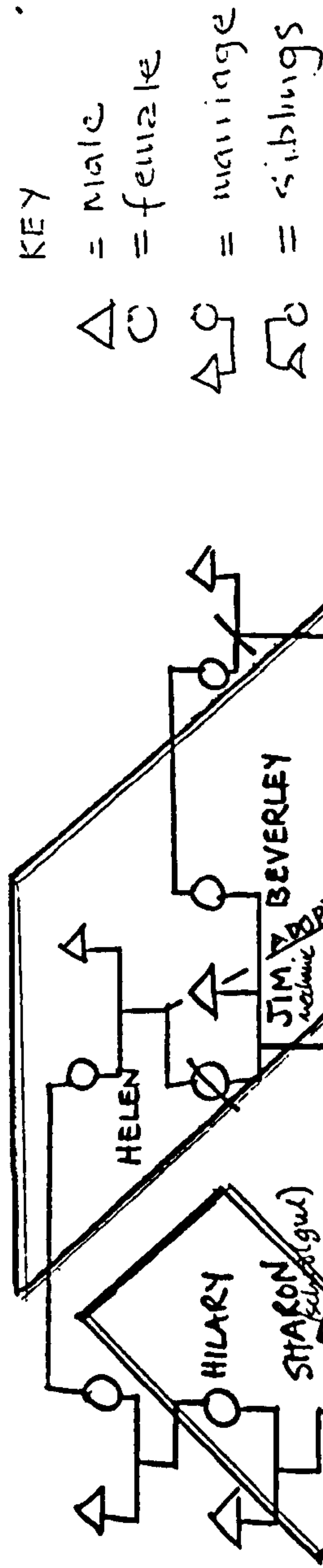
KEY

more
 -- % of closeness.
 less

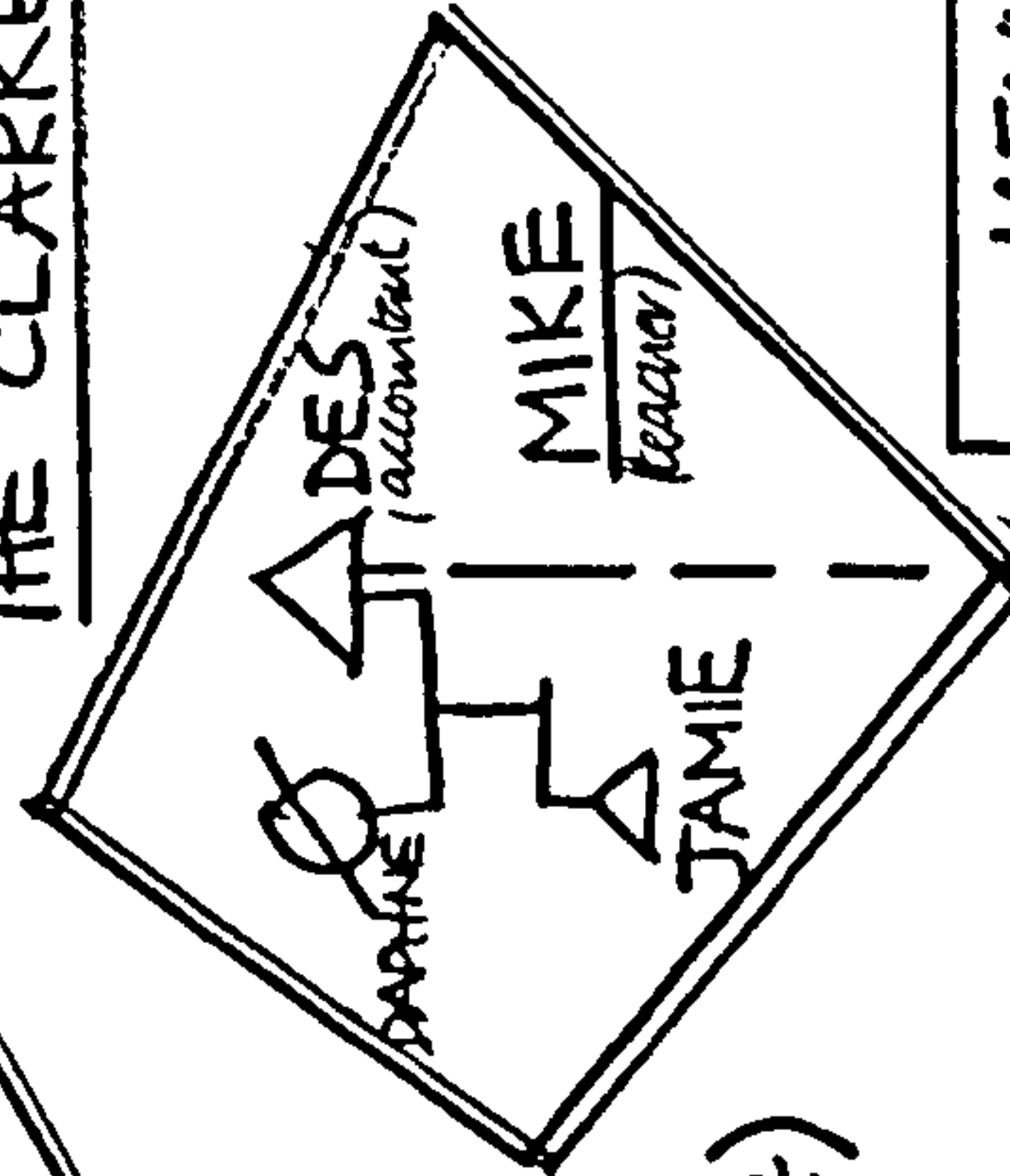
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KINSHIP AND HOUSEHOLD ARRANGEMENTS ON RAMSEY STREET

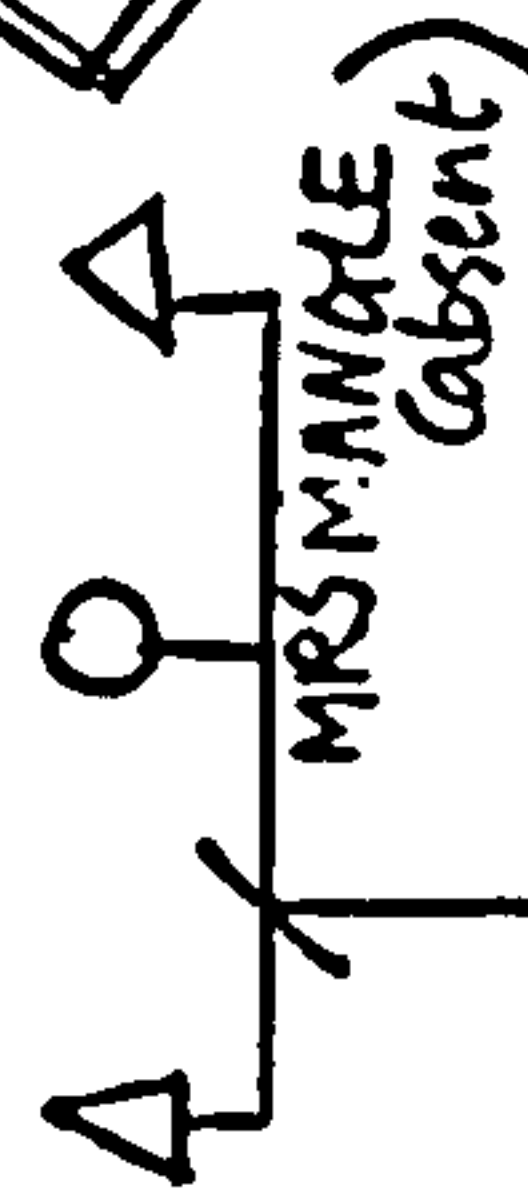
THE ROBINSONS



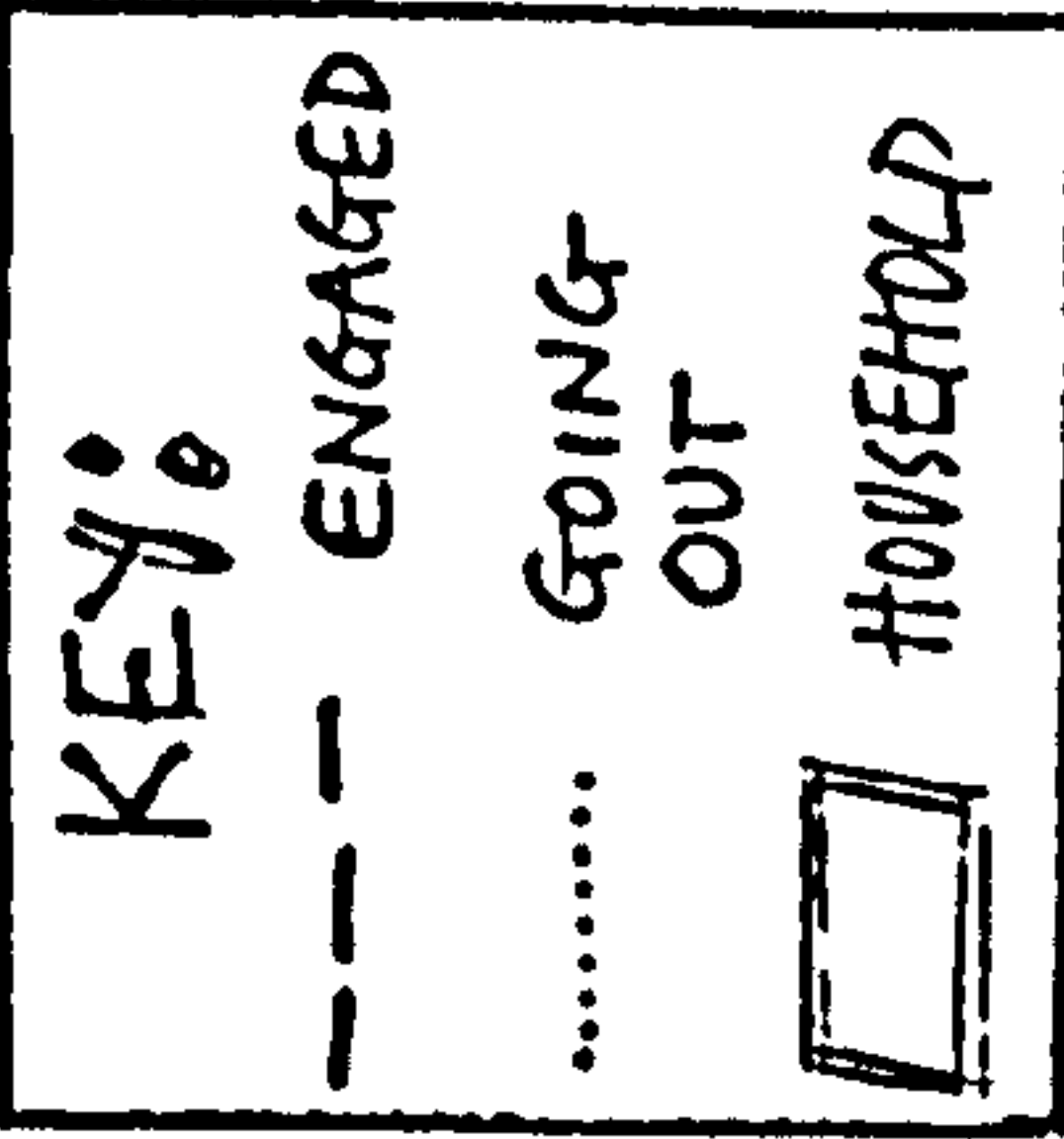
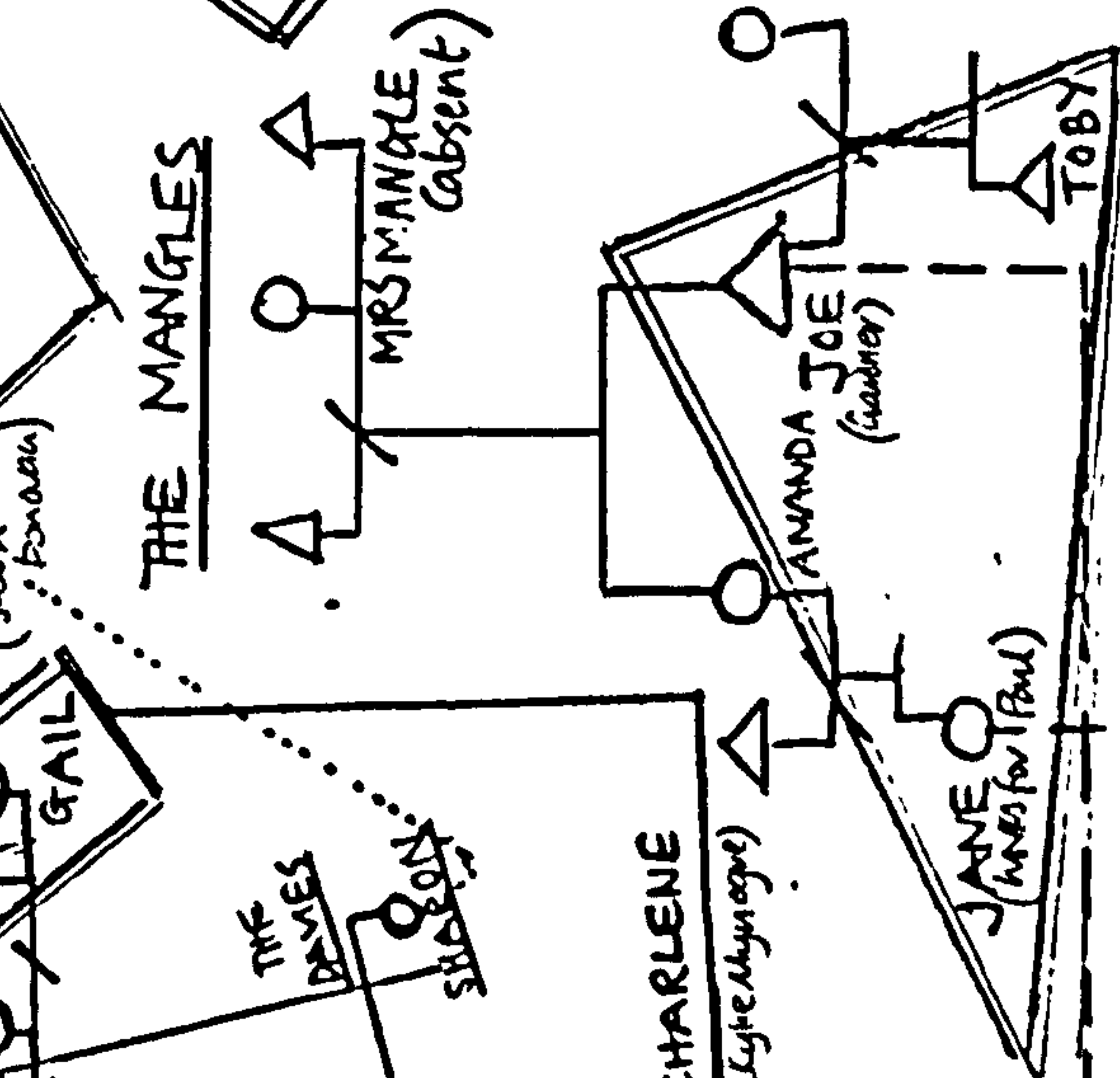
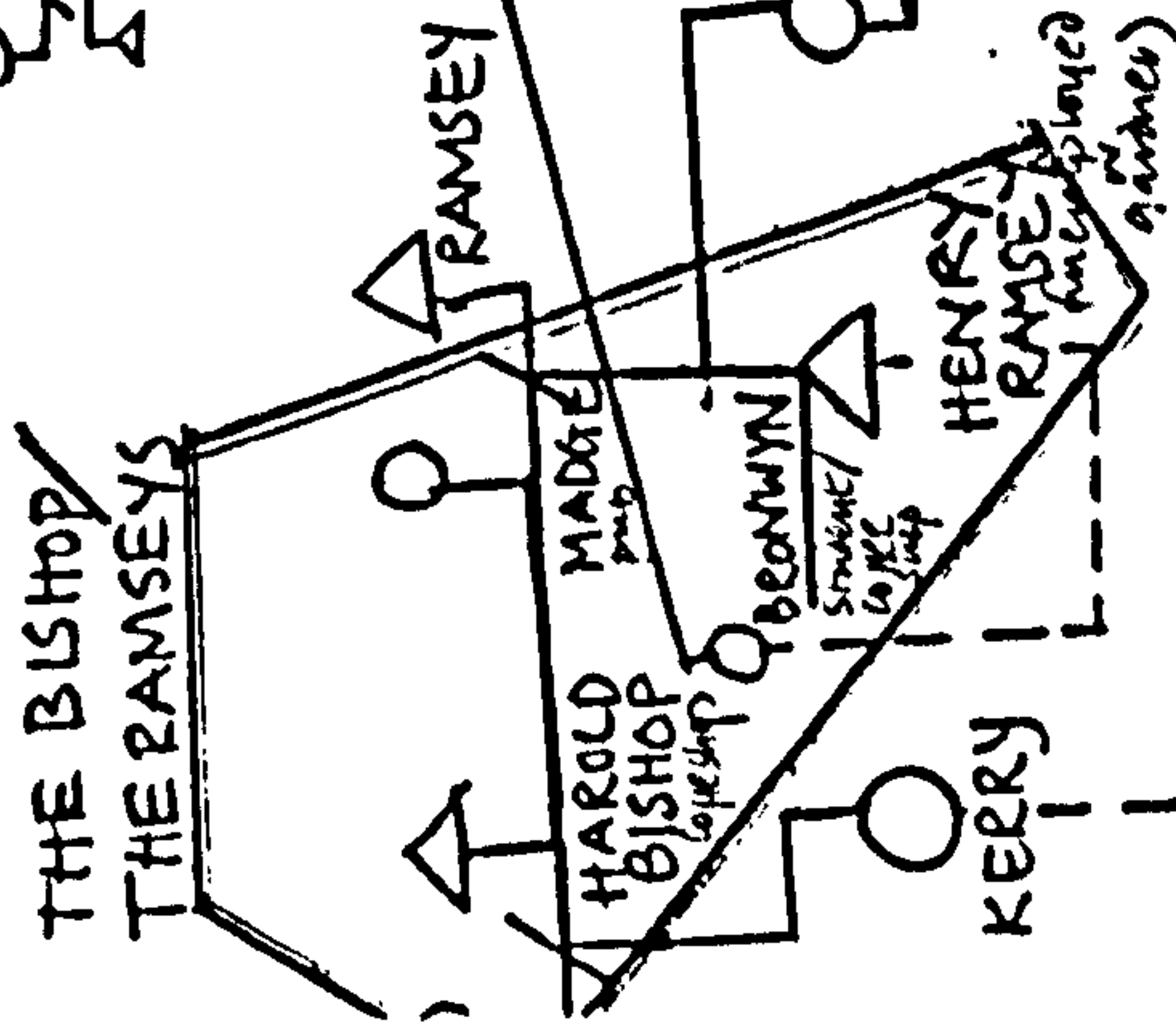
THE CLARKES



THE MANGLES



THE BISHOPS



MAKING SOAPS

GROUP 1: CREATING A SOAP PLOT: 13.3. 90.

5 girls all 16 years old

Meena (Me), Hameeda (H), Sukhi (S), Mona (Mo), Camila (Ca)

5 boys all 16 years old

Mohinderpal (Moh), Chetan (Ch), Kamaljit (K), Simon (S), Diljit (D)

The discussion took place in a classroom, it was taped, I was not present. The brief was to produce the last ten minutes of a soap that they has devised. This was their first discussion.

H- right, what about a single mother , she had an affair with her boyfriend and then he left her right and in this episode he should come and ask for money and that

Mo-there has to be a child

H-yeah blackmail and all that

S-is it a high class soap, is it gonna be glitzy and glamorous

Me-no we should have it like people like us will watch it, people like us

H-yeah and we're all looking forward to it

Mo-yeah like Eastenders

K-we could make it a comedy if you want

Me-shall we make it a comedy?

K-you think a comedy is hard to do yeah but

S-we could have a model right and she wants to have children right

K-well it could be a comedy

(no)

Moh-it's gonna go wrong, it is, its gonna go wrong

Mo-no it wont, we can have just a bit of comedy and a little bit serious

Moh-what all in 10 minutes

Me-we can have comedy and then get serious

D-i dont think we should i think we should be serious

Moh-wait wait shes talking about a single parent mother, whats so funny about that we're gonna tell them about people and the imporatance of it, the troubles people face and seriousness of it we cant make it a joke

Moh-when you watch neighbours theres no comedy in it
D-no theres no comedy in it, its serious, its just like normal life
Me-things like that happen in everyday life
h-were gonna have a single mother in it
Moh-do we all agree with that
(yeah)
H-three girls and one boy
S-each of the kids have a different father
Me-shes divorced
Moh-no not three something like one boy and he comes back to take
custody of it
Me-its got to be a family
Moh-no !
H-yeah, one boy
Mo-you know like a teenage mother
S-and you have to look from a childs point of view whats going on
Moh-a child's point of view! ugh (exasperation)...a baby
H-how old is this child gonna be?
Me-about six or seven years old
S-if shes divocrd right
H-shes not divorced
D-we're going in too much depth
Me-who's gonna play the little boy
D-why cant we do it like it says and just do a family tree
K-listen sukhi just have 2 families feuding right and thats it
S-his parents are rich and her parents are poor right
D-its like copying home and away if you ask me
Moh-yeah, its already been done, what does your story want to be
kamaljit
K-2 families feuding, over a problem between them
Moh-have you all decided its two families feuding over something what
would that feuding be about?
Me-it could be that someone's died right and when they die theyre all
serious but then something comes out of him, some of his past comes
like he might have had an affair
(chorus yeah)

Me-you put the 2 families together in the room and something comes out of it
Mo-no he's written in the will
Me-about his daughter
(no)
D-i think we should have 2 families having lunch together or they're having a barbeque
S-and hes really rich, hes loaded
Moh-no wait, if hes died he will have to leave his money for inheritance
that means we are doing a high class programme
(chorus no)
Me-anyone can leave a will it doesnt mean that it has to be high
Moh-yes it does
(chorus no)
Me-no it doesnt have to be it could be a house or something
H-it is, if he has an affair it is high
Mo-it's not really typical
H-it is high it is ..say in his will right he should leave all his money to the girl he had an affair with
Moh-oh your obsessed with an affair
H-no and thats how the fight happened and he gives her the money
Mo-my idea right, is hes giving a clue on one of his wills thats hes got a child right and one of the people down there dont know that hes got a child, one of those murder stories that you dont know who it is, and someone knows who it is, the one who you know whos been doing it right
K-its gotta be 10 minutes long
Mo-yeah well have evreyone crying all in black and the will gets read and then at the end he says something like..oh and i leave it to my daughter and of course hes never been married or hes never had children right and everybody gets a shock right he says to whoever but it doesnt say whoever and it just ends on a cliffhanger
D-we should start at the funeral
(chorus no)
Mo-in the actual room where the lawyer is

Me-saying the will and hes reading it out
-after that we should show whos leaving the house so we should know
whos whos family, it is 10 minutes long
Me-you could start in the morning
Mo-no the whole family's there because hes had 2 parts from the family
Mo-are there gonna be one family or 2 families
Me- no two families, the one in which he is in, he could be the father
or the son and the other family is where he is giving the money to
Mo-it don't have to be families it could be friends as well
yeah
Mo-so no-one knows the actual wife hes made pregnant right
Me-you can have 2 girls right
S-and he says im gonna leave my money to an unknown child
Me-in the begining you dont know you think its his child and when he
says - to my unborn child - then you think its hers
Mo-or it could start of with a women right, you know how women do
right they rub their stomachs or just feel their stomachs and you
start from that point right then you get the people getting the will
read but you dont know who that woman is
D-hameeda, lets say you were the one whos had that geezers baby right
and hes made one of the other family's daughters pregnant as well and
then when theyre reading the will they go hes gonna leave his money to
the unborn baby and ones already had the kid so
Moh-well if there are 2 ladies then everyones gonna know its ONE of
THEM (exasperated) just do it like no-one knowing whos pregnant and
start off with her rubbing her stomach
Me-no you can have with the wife saying to the husband look im pregent
and then they hug eachother right and then in the will they say to my
unborn child
Moh-but then you know its gonna be her if she says im pregant
Me-but shes the only one who knows
Moh-well shes just told her husband so he knows as well
H-no she can be hugging her husband right and im pregnant and in the
will it says the unborn child and then they discover another lady's
pregnant as well, so you cant tell
Moh-you cant do that how can you do that, how can you discover another

lady's pregnant in 10 minutes?

Me-she lives far a way and then you find out shes pregnant and then you focus the camera on her and in her mind shes going its me

Moh-now on a cliffhanger right do you know who the person is like when JR got shot, you didnt know who it was until they showed it next time and it was actually Bobby who got shot, not jr you dont want to show her face right

S-why dont you have a phone call right from her doctor and you dont know who the bloody woman is and all you hear ..

Moh-yeah thats what i mean you find way, you dont actually show the woman, we see thats shes pregnant and then afterwards someone says to my unborn child then youre not gonna know who it is

D-say like you lot were saying before there was a woman with three daughters and that man had an affair with both or two of the sisters and then when it goes to my unborn child the camera goes to those two and you dont know which one it is

H-you know theres a bitchy man right

Moh-no its too simple right oh yeah evrybody has had an affair with him right

H-hes a man right and hes phoning for someone and two of the ladies pick up the phone

D-you could have two people gossiping behind their back and then when they hear the will

S-no he had three daughters right

- Moh-Oh god he had three daughters now - no right weve got it set, it is that man right hes dead and hes left a will right

Me-he left more money to that child

Mo-it dont have to be money it can be something else but if you want to use money

S-no it could be the house

H-not until the age of 18

Moh-(exasperated) oh this is typical Indian film and then she gets beats until shes 18 and then she signs it to her dad init?

Me-no we're not doing that

Moh-well thats what it sounds like

Me-hes married right and the wife you know she gets the house and all

that but the child gets a sum of money or a mercedez or something
Mo-look we all know that hes left something to the son or the daughter
but we wanna know how hes gonna say it right i think its best what she
said right is not to find out who the woman is
Moh- come on you others you're supposed to be taking part too
S-he had the three adopted girls right and they're all of the ages
and it goes to my unborn child right and they all look at eachother
all three of them, none of them have told each other that theyve been
with the fsather
Moh-no thats too big of an issue to put in there its too serious
(yeah just do something simple right)
mo-yeah something simple
D-why dont we go round in a circle
K-because it would be so complicated right.
Mo-let him finish right
K-what i hear from you is complicated, how to do it as well you gotta
think about that
Mo-the sets, its just gonna be one set thats not complicated the
families, youll have to sit both of the families in the room
Me-well have the set in the living room and well have the families in
there
D- I still think we should have a view from outside the house
Me-ok well have a view with them leaving the house
D-and their friends coming to the house so they look like part of the
family
Me-we can show them coming back from the funeral
Mo-no you could easily show their families by saying and i leave this
part to this member and so on
D-it wont last 10 minutes
Mo-it will
H-listen we think 10 minutes is nothing but 10 minutes is gonna be so
much, look at when we did that ad for 30 seconds and look how long
that took
Me-no lets have them coming back form the funeral
S-you know how gori have funerals and they usually have a little party
and you go back to the house

youre not going to know who that is cos its his funeral and it could be anybody there right, youre not gonna know who it is cos everybody's dressed in black right, he goes there and says it right and everybody just looks in amazement, and thinks who is it right but if youre having two girls all right its gotta be one of them

S-but they'll know

Me-they wont cos they're both married

D-and ones showing

Moh-but if ones showing thatll make it obvious

H-if ones showing every ones gonna think its that one whose showing

Moh-no they wont

Mo-no cos you can tell in all the months and all that

Moh-you cant

Mo-if its something thats popping out right

H-look theres two ladies that are pregnant one is showing and shes next to her husband and the other one is pregnant and she isnt showing and no-one's supposed to know about it, not even her husband

Moh-look thats the same as what were saying but its best just not to have that other woman in

D-its too complicated

Mo-its more exciting innit

Moh-no it isn't it's more exciting finding out that you dont know its any of them, cos everyone s gonna pick on the girl whosshowing

H-yeah and no-ones gonna pick on the girl whose not showing right

S-is he a bachelor or is he married?

Me-hes married

Mo-no i dont think he should be married, i think he should be a bachelor

S-if hes married right and they think its the wife she could turn round and say but i couldnt have children

Mo-if you were the wife right and you knew your husband was gonna leave some money for your child and nobody knew that you could have a child

Me-no everyone knew then

Moh-so whats the point of her saying it then if everyone knew

H-no its just said theres some money to my unborn child and you know

Moh-thats what i mean the reading of the will, everyone standing around and drinking and that talking about the man whos dead and that man who rads the will he knocks on the door and he comes in

""""""""""let her say it""""""""""

Moh-No, let her say it

H-you know the will reader reads the will and everyone goes quiet and before that you have everyone talking and he saying i wonder what hes left he was a rich man and all that and theres a bitchy lady who wants everything you know theres always a bitchy lady

Me-it could be the wife

H-yeas and she thinks shes going to get everything and after then he goes some of this money is gounng to the unborn child and that bitchy woman just walks straight out the door and like it should be a zoom shot to that person

me-no, because nobody knows about

Mo-no oh my god no, if hes got a wife right then the viewers are gonna know that its her right

me-yeah but someone else is gonna be expecting

Mo-but we wanna tell them its nobody

Me- i could get pregnant

Moh-she would say that wouldn't she?

Mo-theres someone there whose having the baby but noone knows right

D-and shes showing

H-we all wear the same kind of c;lothes right, and theres a bit of a party

Mo-you know when she walks out right and puts her hand on her stomach and theres two girls there right but noone knows who they are and when she walks out they dont show her face they only show her hand on her stomach and it sytops there

H-thats a good idea

D-and one should be showing you can tell shes pregnant and shes got a husband there whose been chatting to her, being nice to her but she looks strained but you wont be able to tell who puts their hand there

Moh-and so when i said that at the begining why did noone agree

Me-you said it right at the very begining of the 10 minutes

Moh-but like we said if she puts her hand or theres a telephone call

when someones had a shock they go (grimace) but but i cant have children and everyone just looks at her and says yeah she cant have children

Moh-oh shes gonna be his wife yeah

S-yeah and everyones giving congratulations to her and she cant have kids

D-then she looks at the other one who is
(no no no)

Mo-no-ones supposed to know

Moh-if everybody knew i could have a child and then i adopted a child and pretended it was his then that child would get an inheritance and all the stuff and so would you, so you wouldnt really say that i cant have kids

Me-but you say it out of shock if you hear something like that then youre not exactly gonna keep it in your mind, you wanna tell it to someone

Me-well stop it where she says i cant have babies

Moh-(exasperated) cant have babies!

K-thats all right that is all right

D-you could just have someone gossiping

H-you know the bitchy woman

K-that is all right

H-she could say But she cant have children

Mo-or as you say she runs out and somebody says

H-or the wife keeps the mouth shut right and that gossip one says a few weeks ago she told me she couldnt have kids and thats how it finishes off right, the wife keeps it inside her and she says yeah i can keep it inside me, so my husband wont get a bad name or anything

Moh-get a bad name for what

H-you know when he says for my unborn child

Mo-she knows who it is

H-no and the gossip woman who never got nothing in the will right, says she told me a few weeks ago that she cant have kids

S-she says shes pregnant but shes not just to keep the money

K-sounds good sounds good

H-and to keep his respect high, like hes got high respect

Me-like he could be a lawyer who had a heart attack
Moh-seems that evrybody is agrred with that then
Mo-no i was just gonna say that
H-all ten agrees right sorted! (bangs table)
Mo-Im just saying that to bring the other woman in
Moh-no we agree right
Mo-but to bring the other woman in its much better if we dont know who anybody is, when you dont know who is pregnant but we are automatically gonna know that its not you
Me-but thats the thing
S-that will make it look good cos well know hes got someone else
D-the camera just goes round
Moh-Wow! Chetan said something he said 'it is' why dont you say it using the speaker instead of saying it while everyone is arguing
Ahhhh chetan do you agree with that idea?
C-what idea?
Moh-ahh do you want us to do a playback for you?
Me-look what were showing is..before the begining hows it gonna be
Moh-ok well still stick with the lady who pats her stomach
Mo-you know i think it would be better if before you stop it the camera just goes on someone
H-no, it goes all the way around
K-theyre all dressed up in suits
H-listen then it goes all the way round the room slowly and then it blanks off
Me-it goes round the room and it comes back to the wife whs still standing there amazed
H-its better than showing a persons stomach
D-but if everyones wearing dark clothes youre not gonna know..
Me-they're all coming back from the funeral right and you can see all the cars right and theyre coming into the living room where the wills gonna be told, the man knocks on the door and he comes in
Moh-but first of all you were all complaining that it was all gonna be in different rooms and i said its better in one room
Me-theyre coming into one room,
Moh-thats better you didnt say it like that-whats suki trying to say

H-sukhi you better not say anything about single mothers right
S-you heave the wife right and the old woman nattering away as theyre drinking champagne right as theyre being called in for the will right
Nooo
H-everyones involved in the will
Moh-go on you child say it
H-right the will man comes into the room
(laughter)
Moh-oh my god the will man, the LAWYER!
H-the lawyer comes in and says hed like to read the will and everyone thinks theyre gonna get something out of it and like he doesnt say it out fast right and people dont get things out of it
Moh-no people do get things out of it ..but not very good things right
H-thats what im saying
Me-(giggling) whos gonna get the dog
H-but they're expecting it and ant the end they say the most sum of money is going to go to his unborn child and the wife's face right..
Mo-she sits down really quiet and the other woman says but she cant have children right and the camera goes round to evryones face and then it ends on her face and then it finshes
me-she could finish it by saying something
Mo-no just in silence you know make it look really sinister and wicked and then it just ends
D-lets do a family tree
Moh-i think the way were doing it is high class
H-yeah it is
D- i like it that way actaully
H-its better than having two families and a school kid comes home and says oh im pregnant to her mum and then she gives her a few slaps and you know
(laughter)
Moh-but im not sure about that gossip cos if shes a mangle type people are gonna think shes a gossip and shes probably got it all wrong anyway
Me-but ill go - but i cant have children
Moh-look our story is done now were not changing it

PRODUCING 'TROUBLE IN THE FAMILY'

THE GANG IN THE GROUP

There were eleven 16 year olds in the group five girls and five boys. Of the boys in the group Mohinderpal and Diljit are best friends and Kamaljit tags on with them. Simon and Chetan are loners. Apart from Mohinderpal who acted as a self appointed chairman in the first planning session, the boys did not get much opportunity to contribute ideas because the girls dominated the discussion. It is worth going into some detail to describe the group of girls since this will shed light on subsequent interpretations of the data.

The girls in the group called themselves 'The Gang' and were infamous in school for their raucous and raunchy behaviour. They were all unparalleled school failures. Some were simply lazy, others had learning difficulties and for whatever reason were not very bright at schoolwork and I qualify that advisedly for in other spheres like in their own peer interaction they showed exceptional wit and quick thinking. Their ingenuity at liberating themselves from school or home duties and for dealing with trouble when it arrived, and it did so frequently, was astonishing. They were inseparable except for when, in their eyes, circumstances conspired against their being together. The bonds of loyalty between them were extremely strong and I have rarely seen such commitment between a group of 5 girls in this way (between two it is not uncommon). If one was not allowed to go somewhere nobody would go.

There existed a pecking order within the group with Hameeda, a Muslim girl as leader. She was older than the rest of the group (17), proud, self-confident, articulate and level headed in crises. Qualities that were not present in the other girls in the same combination. She had a boyfriend of 22 years whom she dated for 6 months after which she claims 'it just fizzled out'

Mona was held in some esteem because she had been dating 'Turbo' for nearly a year. They were very much an item and hoped to get married in

spite of the fact that he is Jat Sikh and she is Tarkaan. Mona was quiet, conventional and conformist by nature.

Meena is a Hindu girl stood out in that she was the tallest member of the group and one of the most defiant to teachers and rude to peers outside the gang. She liked to think of herself as the rebel but her outspokenness, full of sexual innuendo, was often reduced to simple vulgarity that never quite made everyone laugh as much as she hoped.

Camila is lowest in the group's hierarchy. This may have something to do with the fact that she is a chamar (a low caste Sikh) but it is also to do with her slothful character. She is a small, plump girl who seems to be already middle aged. The gang frequently remark that she speaks Punjabi like a Pendu (derogatory term for peasant) but she gains attention almost solely by making crude jokes in Panjabi and generally acting the 'dumb' clown. She is the least socialised in conventional manners and her work experience report referred to her rather unkindly as 'uncivilised' and 'uncouth'.

Sukhi is the little sister of the gang, she is the youngest in her family and also in the gang. She is well mannered, 'sweet', lively, fashionable (acid house style) and most attractive (to her male peers) member of the gang. She has a regular turnover of boyfriends and with aged parents and no older siblings living at home gets more freedom to go out than any of the others which means that she can sustain dating arrangements more easily. The rest of the group especially Hameeda are constantly trying to advise her as to her boyfriends.

The culture of the gang is like a coin; heads is 'having a laugh' and that usually means talking about boys and sex and being with boys. It is anti - school and a bare minimum of work and attendance ensures there are no letters home to parents. 'Cruising' the High Street by foot, approaching boys, to ask them out or to 'cuss' them, laughing and joking rudely and swearing loudly are favourite activities in public. They also love to gossip about happenings at school, about who's going out with who, about what people are wearing and about last night's Neighbours

of which they are all avid fans

The flip side is the problems that ensue from all their activities not least, breaking up with boyfriends and deceiving parents. On several occasions I have gone into the classroom to be greeted by the gang sobbing their hearts out because for example Mona's parents have discovered that she's going out with Turbo and she is being kept at home or that Meena has finished with her 'boyfriend' because he humiliated her and that she is feeling suicidal. The inexhaustible emotional energy required to survive the intensity of everyday life is beyond what most humans could endure but undoubtedly they gain strength from friendship and loyalty to each other which seems to be equally intense. Let us now see how these group dynamics manifest themselves in the production process.

STAGE ONE

In devising their own soap every aberration in family arrangements which the group could conceive of was considered. What is astonishing is that there should be so many variations. There were 22 main permutations in all some of which have alternative scenarios built into them.

THE SCENARIOS IMAGINED

1. A single mother has an affair with her boyfriend. He leaves her and later returns to blackmail her.

The incompatibility of motherhood and promiscuity leading to punishment.

2. A single mother with 3 girls and a boy, each of the children has a different father and she's divorced.

Promiscuity of mother threatens notion of family and the loyalty of siblings. This is not a legitimate family and all above permutations are rejected for this reason "No! it's got to be a family" The idea of divorce is then tagged on and introduces the idea of legitimacy.

3. A divorced woman has one boy and the ex husband comes back to take custody of his son

. Formerly, a legitimate family, now a broken one, the parents have to face the law they can no longer control their own affairs, the child is the pawn.

4. A teenage mother who is divorced and you have to look at events from a child's point of view

Marrying young is a risk and the child of the divorced couple suffers

In Scenarios 1-4 women drive the narrative

5. 2 families who are feuding. One is rich the other is poor.

The idea of a feud between two families as a threat to the integrity of families and now it is males who drive the narrative

6. 2 families feuding because one of the men has died and his past affair is then revealed.

The legitimacy of first marriage and associated family is introduced only to be threatened by the promiscuity/infidelity of the man

7. 2 families feuding because one of the men dies and in his will leaves his money to his daughter

Here the idea of inheritance is introduced but wills to daughters cause trouble in patrilineal societies (if he had no sons who would take precedence? cousins?)

8. 2 families , a rich man dies and he leaves all his money to the girl he had an affair with.

wealth and infidelity threaten the integrity of the family, rich people are more likely to be unfaithful but the 'other' woman threatens the family not only morally but economically in that she i.e. her family inherits his wealth

9. A rich man dies and a child of his who is unknown to his family inherits the money.

This scenario introduces the idea of illegitimate child who is acknowledged and rather than the mother, the child, blood kin, inherits the money.

10. An unmarried man leaves all his money to a daughter who is unknown to his family.

re-introduce the idea of daughter, this time an unknown daughter, who inherits, the idea is quickly dismissed again.

11. Two families are involved the family he is in (wife) and the family he's giving money to (mistress). Both 'girls' are pregnant. He leaves his money to his unborn child but no-one knows which child it will be.

The feud centres on his illegitimate family receiving his inheritance at this point the girls in the group start attaching roles to each other "say you're the one who had the geezer's baby.. (wife)"

12. A wife has her husband's child but he has also made the unmarried daughter in the other family pregnant. He leaves his money to his unborn child.

Older man having sex with younger girl and their illegitimate son takes precedence over legitimate son.

The following scenarios are suggested while considering whether audience

should a) know or not know the identity of the 'other lady' b) see or not see her or

13. The wife is pregnant and an other lady is pregnant but it is not known which of the children he has left his money to, the other lady lives far away

woman is not actually shown since this will create more suspense.

14. A man has three adopted daughters. He has made two of them pregnant. He leaves his money to his unborn child but the daughters don't know which of the unborn children it is

implication of abuse in this scenario. The idea of a 'bitchy woman' who gossips is suggested as a way of revealing information to the audience. The group are increasingly thinking about narration through images

15. A father dies and leaves his money to his daughter but she cannot touch the money until she is 18. The mother remarries and the stepfather beats her and makes her sign the money over to him

This scenario is immediately rejected "that's a typical Indian film"

16. Father dies and leaves his house to his wife and either his money or a mercedes to his illegitimate son or daughter.

Here the idea of inheritance of property as opposed to money or luxury commodities is introduced

17. The man dies, he had three adopted daughters of varied ages, an unborn child is to inherit the money but none of the daughters have told each other that they have been with the father.

This is a return to scenario 14 and is immediately rejected "no! that's too big an issue, it's too serious!" It involves abuse not incest.

18. The man dies, he has a bitchy wife who expects to get everything but he leaves his money to his unborn child and the identity of mother unknown

this introduces the idea of the 'bitchy wife' which now begins to turn our sympathies away from her and toward the 'other woman'. Meena, laughing, suggests a role for herself "I could get pregnant"

19. Two girls both married and both pregnant, one is showing obviously and she's next to her husband the other is not showing and has not told anybody. Even her husband doesn't know, but audience does.

rejected: "it's best not to have the other woman in it otherwise everyone will know that she is the mother of his unborn child who he leaves his money to"

20. The man is a bachelor because then no-one will expect the money to go to his wife.

at this point the wife's infertility/barreness is introduced

21. The man is married. His wife could not have children. He leaves his money to his unborn child. The wife keeps it a secret and she adopts a child and pretends it's his to get the money.

This is rejected as being too difficult to show and the idea of a gossiping bitchy woman is introduced who will tell the audience that the wife can't have children and also it is decided that 'to keep his respect high he should be a lawyer

22. The final scenario

A rich lawyer has a heart attack and dies. A mystery woman arrives at the reading of the will. The lawyer announces that the man has left his money to his unborn child. We automatically know it's not his wife. He's

obviously had an affair and the audience suspect, but are not sure, that the mystery woman is carrying his child.

EXPLAINING THE RANGE OF SCENARIOS

How are we to explain the wide range of hypothetical scenarios?

First, their familiarity with the soap genre generally and Dallas and Dynasty in particular would lead them toward the idea of illicit or illegitimate liaisons. When asked what were the typical ingredients of soaps this group clearly had Dallas (which was being broadcast at the time) uppermost in their minds; the ingredients referred to included 'sex', 'affairs', 'bed-hopping' 'scandal', 'glitz', 'glamour'. All topics, which among themselves, they frequently discussed.

Secondly, their ability to conceptualise family relationships far exceeds that of anybody who is not familiar with 'Asian' kinship systems. The facility with which the group generate, grasp and elaborate upon the twenty at times cryptic scenarios considered is quiteremarkable. But these two factors explain neither the content nor the range of the variations.

AN INORDINATE FANTASY OF ILLEGITIMACY?

What unites these variations is a clash between the idea of household and that of family. Every conceivable household arrangements which do not serve the family is considered. Furthermore they all involve a threat to or imbalance in the ideal conception of marriage. They are all scenarios in which legitimate arrangements have been flouted.

Normally, legitimacy would involve two known parents shared by siblings who are bound by particular conventions of inheritance. Infidelity, incest, illicit sexual relations with step daughters and divorce all split the family and threaten the loyalty of siblings.

Out of this speaks the dread of marriage not because it is a life long bond but because of the threat of something going wrong. It is a powerful testimony to their tacit understanding of the fact that the

integrity of the family is not God- given or culture bound but a potentially fragile social phenomenon .

What can be read from the scenarios is that wills to daughters cause problems and to unknown daughters even worse problems. Wills to unknown sons do not occur which suggests that fathers will never fail to acknowledge illegitimate sons but will fail to acknowledge illegitimate daughters. Thus fathers acknowledge the bond of sons more readily than daughters from which we might infer an underlying dread of dowry arrangements

What motivates the character of the variations is threat to

- a) the standing of one's family
- b) the permanence of marriage ie no second marriage
- c) the unity of the sibling group
- d) the unity of generations
- e) the unity of cousins

The range of scenarios is clearly partly induced by media experiences of tragic/romantic fictions in soap operas, films, magazines and elsewhere. For example a very popular tv drama not long before the soap production began was 'Stolen'. This was a five part serial which dramatised the custody battle of an English mother whose Pakistani husband had abducted their child and taken her to live in Pakistan. The drama probably succeeded in putting the fear of Pakistani men into more than one girl's heart as well as placing a taboo on mixed marriages.

Documentaries exploring the 'problem' experienced by young 'Asians' are not uncommon and indeed around the time of production there had been a particularly provocative feature on 'This Week' which was much discussed and criticised by young people at school. It reported upon vigilante gangs, such as Shere Punjab in Birmingham, who allegedly stalk the streets in search of runaways and young people who have become involved in illicit relationships of one sort or another and gave details of particular cases.

Local gossip is another and probably more important source of information about family aberrations. All of the students from whom I subsequently elicited scenarios derived from hear say were able to recount at least three and up to ten variations of things that had gone wrong in either marriage arrangements or families. The boundary between scenarios known from gossip and those known directly from experience is not always clear but an example of what I was told from a young Muslim woman might offer some insights.

According to her, there is an unwritten rule that direct experiences and stories of illegitimacy should be kept 'within the generation' but that this rule is of course not always upheld. She believes that the range of scenarios is due to the fact that there is a great deal of illegitimate liaisons which are happening.

The following are stories which she has been told or heard

a)(through her sister) a cross cousin marriage which the young man did not want but agreed to for the sake of his parents. The marriage has never been consummated and both have taken 'lovers' and yet continue to present themselves as man and wife to the 'community'.

b)(directly from the girl) 'arranged marriage', husband virtually rapes her on their wedding night. She remains with husband but regularly 'sees' a white man with whom she had a relationship before she married

c) (through sister) Girl has marriage arranged by woman living nearby to one of her nephews from Pakistan. She marries him behind her father's back. The father calls the girl back home and insists on a divorce because she has gone behind his back. She now remains confined at home.

She claims that three girls whom she 'actually went to school' are now dead because

a) girl commits suicide rather than have the marriage which her parents have arranged for her in which she had no say

b) young married woman has an affair and is discovered, her throat is cut by her husband

c) young married girl runs away from husband because he beats her, he comes after her with his brothers and she is murdered by husband's brother.

This same young woman also claims that when she was eight her family went to Pakistan on holiday to her father's brother's home. Her mother was pregnant at the time with her sixth child. Whilst on holiday her father slept with his brother's wife. She was told this by her mother. The mother found out about the affair whilst she was there. They returned home. The brother's wife became pregnant by the father. Her mother's 6th. child was stillborn and the brother's wife also lost her child. The father's brother left his wife and came to England. She returned to Lahore to her 5 unmarried sisters. The family have stayed together but when the father gets ill the mother says to her daughter 'it is god punishing him because he has sinned'.

PEER ROLES AND SCREEN ROLES

The roles to be played were decided in accordance with established hierarchy and functions of different members of 'The Gang'. Hameeda would play the role of wife and Camila the mother in law who had come from India for the funeral. The group capitalised upon her talent as the most 'authentic' speaking and acting Indian; she is able to spoof older indian women's behaviour and language with such exactitude and resonance that she became a constant source of amusement to the whole group; partly it has to do with the way that she speaks Panjabi. Mona claims 'she speaks the real Indian, just like the old women, the right accent, the right words its just so funny'.

The raucous laughter when Camila emerged ready for the part was partly because in traditional clothing she really did look like an older woman; she enjoyed the attention unperturbed and unselfconsciously

The complicity the group experiences in witnessing Camila, unashamedly spoofing elders and, above all, speaking Panjabi with such imitative skill, is something to be heard and seen; she has internalised the character and behaviour of older women, through experiences of family and film. The speed of repartit in panjabi was remarkable.

Diljit and Kamaljit are both tall Sikh boys, who the girls find attractive. Diljit plays the role of the lawyer and Kamaljit the brother of the deceased. Mohinderpal, an articulate Sikh boy is considered to be the leader among males and consequently assumed the role of director. All three command the respect of the girls.

There were two prominent outsiders in the group. Simon, a quiet Hindu boy who wishes to have nothing to do with anything 'Indian' and who is often teased for being 'pansy' 'gay' and thin 'anorexium' what you call it?', cries Hammeda, 'he's got anorexium, he doesn't eat'. He plays the role of nephew and in one scene he refuses to eat prasad (holy food) which establishes him as an outsider in the production as well.

His inability and refusal to speak Hindi or Panjabi further casts him as an outsider.

The second is Chetan, a shy Hindu boy, who became the scapegoat, no-one, not even the more sensitive members of the group, ever addresses him in any other way but with insults, jibes and jeers. He is treated as a nobody and withstands this harsh treatment from his peers with quiet acceptance and a certain dignity. They jeer at him "oh chetan said something! he said yes!; To the group he is boring; he does not dance or swear. He was to be the floor manager but became the general 'dogsbody', since whatever he did was heavily criticised often without justification

A STORM IN THE SOAP

During the first week of planning the soap Meena had 'a fit', she went beserk, became violent and tried to throw herself under a car outside school. She physically attacked and 'cussed' her friends, especially

Sukhi, shouting 'slag' and 'whore' at her in the street and then continued to do so in the sixth form recreation area. It was a public show of the highest order and it became the subject of school gossip. For some reason, teachers did not get to hear about the incident and it was not reported to her parents. Although her older sister did find out that she was feeling suicidal.

All I was told at first was that it was boyfriend trouble. The Gang thought she had been possessed or that someone had performed witchcraft on her. Later they revised that explanation and thought she had finished with her boyfriend and then possibly taken some drugs.

The following day she told me that her 'boyfriend', had publicly humiliated her in front of friends. He apologised and she forgave him then he had taken her to a deserted place in college and forced himself upon her. "i feel so used, i just want to hit him, i wont rest until i hit him; i want to hurt him the way hes hurt me"

Such was the violence of her emotion that she continued to say that she wanted to kill herself. Her friends took her threat seriously enough to devise a rota so that she wouldnt be alone over the weekend.

LET'S MAKE IT A HIGH CLASS INDIAN SOAP

There is an interesting juxtaposition in the use of the word 'high class' and simply 'high', the structured absence in the second presumably being caste.

The question of whether it was to be a high class soap or not was discussed and they appeared to agree that a high class soap involves wealthy people, glitz and glamour and storylines around blackmail for which their reference point is Dallas and Dynasty. Not everyone was in favour of doing a high class soap

Meena - No we should have it so people like us will watch it, people like us

There was some disagreement about whether incorporating a storyline about inheritance constituted a high class soap

Meena - anyone can leave a will it doesn't have to be high'

Mohinderpal - yes it does

Meena - no, it doesn't have to mean money it could be a house

Hameeda - if he has an affair, it is high

Mohinderpal - No, not really

Hameeda - it is high! it is! say in his will he leaves all the money to the girl he had an affair with

Mohinderpal - oh you're obsessed with an affair

And later the issue comes up again but the group agree on the terms

Hameeda - And to keep his respect high, he's got to have high respect

Meena - he could be a lawyer

Mohinderpal - seems everyone's agreed on that.

These extracts demonstrate a negotiation of the categories caste and class

"The idea of an Indian man cheating behind his wife was clever because you never think that a respectable Indian man would do this. The image that most Indian men in our community give to us is that they are hardworking, respectable, honest and loyal. This idea was the total opposite." Kamaljit

"The dead man had affairs and dodgy business so his death is suspicious"

"He's a rich asian business man like the one in that programme last week" Hameeda

There is much in the media generally in recent months attempting to portray 'postive' images of Asians'. There was also the case of Mr. Gill, a Sikh businessman who was murdered. There were rumours about illegal dealings as well as illicit affairs.

'yeah', says camila, 'all these Indian business men are the same they own a string of shops or supermarkets, clubs, businesses..and they fuck white women'

Raucous laughter

MOTHER - DAUGHTER IN LAW CONFLICT

The mother of the deceased is outraged at the ways of Indians in England and blames her daughter in law for her son's death. His wife couldnt bear him children. She was not a good wife. She dresses improperly i.e not in 'traditional Indian clothes', even at the funeral she wore the wrong clothes and make up. She shouldnt wear a tikka (a red spot worn on the forehead to symbolise that a woman is an honourable wife).

THE FUNERAL: RITUAL ON AND OFF SCREEN

We had much discussion about the features of an Indian funeral; wearing white, the white sheet on the floor. Diljit was very anxious that the funeral scene should be authentic and that the girls should wear traditional clothing except for Hameeda

The ritual of funerals were discussed; the white sheet; the wailing behaviour of older women, eating prasad (holy food) and arrangements were made to bring these along; these were details constantly returned to on the final afternoon of preparation.

Diljit brought the picture of the guru and incense and one of the girls not in the group made the prasad. The first thing they did upon

arriving at the studio was to set the scene; Diljit laid the white cloth with careful attention. Then he lit the incense with great reverence and then i observed him trying to extinguish the flame with his hands. Meena blew it out

'dont do that! youre not supposed to blow it," cried diljit angrily

"why?" she asked

"thats holy smoke you might put some spit or germs on it

"i blew it out" says Meena laughing to Mona

"yes", says Mona "you mustn't do that!"

Diljit was extremely reverential in the placing of the gurus image, the incense and prasad. With his back turned, Camila true to character, surreptiously steals a bite of the prasad and in doing so knocks the picture down. Diljit in outragesnapped at her

"watch what youre doing"

and Camila with the gaucheness of a slapsyick artist patted the picture and said

"sorry God!" while smiling meekly to Diljit who stood there glaring at her.

'TROUBLE IN THE FAMILY'

(transcribed from final video production which was improvised)

CAST

CAMILA : MOTHER OF DECEASED FROM INDIA

HAMEEDA : WIFE OF DECEASED

KAMALJIT : DECEASED'S ELDER BROTHER

MONA : WIFE OF ELDER BROTHER

SIMON : NEPHEW OF DECEASED (PARENTS UNSPECIFIED / NOT PRESENT)

SUKHI : THE MYSTERY WOMAN

BALBIR SINGH SANDHU : THE DECEASED

SCENE ONE

Car arrives at cemetery

Shot of family mourning at graveside

Camila - (in Punjabi) Oh my son! my son! my son is dead! oh my God!

Lawyer - (to Simon) have we met before?

Simon - I'm Simon, Balbir Singh's nephew

The car leaves the cemetery

Shot of mystery woman under tree, she walks toward the grave and places a single rose on the grave and pays her last respects

SCENE TWO

At the house of the deceased

Shot of Guru Gobind Singh, incense burning and religious chant.

Camila - (being consoled by Mona) (in Panjabi) Oh my son! my son! he's dead, I am lost without my son! (wailing) If one's young son dies how can a mother live!

(talking about Hameeda) Oh the slut! the liar! she took my son away, she killed him! slut! I've nothing left! She couldn't have children! Useless!

Simon - what's she saying?

Mona - She's blaming his wife for everything, she says she killed her son, his wife never gave him what he wanted

Simon - what was that?

Mona - kids, he always wanted kids but she could never have them

Camila - (in Panjabi) She could never have kids! Oh my son! why has he left his mother? why is she wearing a tikka? (red mark worn on forehead to symbolise an honourable wife) she has no shame!

Hameeda - (sitting in another corner next to Kamaljit)
These people have just come for the will, they never came when he was alive

Kamaljit - I don't want to talk about the will right! he's dead!

Hameeda - I wish they don't get nothing from the will

Kamaljit - Will you just stop talking about the will! Just stop talking about it!

Hameeda - No -one cares about him here

Kamaljit - Stop! Just stop talking about it!

Camila - (in Panjabi) my son! my young son has died

Mona enters carrying prasad (holy food) she offers it to Simon

Simon - Ugh! No thank-you!

others accept the prasad

Camila - (angered) you tell me why didn't he accept the prasad

(to simon) Aren't you ashamed? My son has died and you didnt take prasad, it's from God, it's God's food, you dog! have you no respect? And why is she (looking at Hameeda) sitting there wearing a black suit, has she got no shame?

(wailing) and he! he didn't take the prasad! why oh why!

SCENE THREE

Simon - Uncle, he was a healthy man and he died of a heart attack

Kamaljit - (grieving) I don't know

Simon - Surely you must know something uncle?

Kamaljit - Just leave me alone

Simon -Uncle, but people are saying he was a rich person

Kamaljit - he's dead just leave him alone I don't care what people are saying about him

Simon -Even his own mother is blaming his wife

Kamaljit - i know him right! just leave him alone

Simon - Uncle, did he have an affair with someone?

Kamaljit - I don't know

Simon - his own mother is saying that it's because his wife couldn't have children

Kamaljit -will you just stop

Simon - oh come on uncle you'll have to tell me

Kamaljit - tell you what?

Simon - you must know something

Kamaljit - I don't know nothing, all I know is he's dead

SCENE FOUR

At the solicitor's office the family are gathered for the reading of the will

Lawyer - This is the last will and testament of Balbir Singh Sandhu of 145, Trinity Rd

The door opens and the mystery woman walks in

Lawyer - I will now continue with Balbir Singh Sandhu's will

"I hereby revoke all former wills and testimonary dispositions heretofore made by me. I appoint my brother Kamaljit to be the executor and trustee of this my will.

I hereby give, devise and bequeath all my property to

(Hameeda stands up as if to receive a document)

to the mother of my two year old son. The name of that woman is contained within this envelope

Close up of Hameeda shocked and then a close up and zoom in and then out on each of the family's faces with final close up shot of mystery woman smiling wryly

GROUP 2

This group consisted of 4 sixteen year old girls

AMERJIT PAL (A), KULJIT DHALIWAL (K), TERINDER SIDHU (T), DALJIT
PATTAR (D)

D-two families right ones asian and the other

T-make it english right

D-a member of the english family..theres a daughter right and she goes
to the same school as the daughter of the other family

T-no twist it the other way round cos girls they get strict

D-Asian girls are strict and one of the english friends becomes best
friends with her and makes her socialise more

T-make it an english boy, he wants to go out with this indian girl
yeah (agreement)

K-the asian girl wants to go out as well but its the parents

D-the neighbours

K-no the parents

D-no the neighbours

T-not parents thats too you know

K-no the asian girl's parents dont let her

T-ok we'll make it neighbours, they're both neighbours, right and they
get to know eachother well

D-no not neighbours, that's too close, they live in the opposite
street

T-neighbours right, the girl right, she doesnt tell the english boy
that she likes him and the english boy

A-tries to make hints at her

T-he likes her right but he asks her out, they go to the same school
as well and they're, most of their lessons they have are the same yeah

d-you know the Asian family right, its strict, they're strict so they
wouldn't like an english girl going out with an Indian bloke innit?

t-they wouldn't like the Indian girl going out in any case cos of her
culture and loyalty whatever

a-English boy?

T-English boy yeah, they can do anything they like,

D-Haa,Haa slap

T-But the problems with the Indian girl
yeah laughter
T-yeah but the indian girl cant do what she likes can she?
yeah
K-thats why she wants to keep it a SECRET (loud)
T-the girl keeps it a secret right and they find out later that shes
got a, what shall we name the indian girl
D-Shameen
K-Teri
T-no
A-mandeep
D-the girls name is Shameen and the boys name is chris
no
D-Peter then
T-no, Michael J fox, i didnt say that kuljit did
D-Don't say Michael J fox
D-say his names Peter then, we have to say what kind of personalities
and interest the characters have
K-the english boy is carefree
D-the english boy goes out and hes more socialising and he likes the
Indian girl but the indian girl cant innit
A-she likes him as well but she cant
K-cos of her parents right
D-yeah she likes the boy
T-yeah she likes the boy but she cant go out with him
D-she goes to the same school as him, shall we say that?, but they
cant meet there because everyone will know innit?
T-yeah she goes to the same school as him but you know when theyre
playing out in the garden or when any of them steps out right they're
not to talk to eachother cos you know theyll
A-get suspicious or something
T-another thing we'll make right, you know the parents right, theyre
ok right but you know the english girls family right, boys family
right, they don't like the Indian family
A-they dont want the boy to get mixed up with her
T-they talk to indians but they dont like to socialise with them

A-with the Indian yeah

T-so they dont find out theyre going with each other until yeah what?
lets make it like Mandeep right she has a friend, a er english friend
as well which is er um

A- cousin sisters

T-yeah whats the boys name?

A-Paul's sister

T-yeah,

D-where's the place gonna be?

T-no, Pauls cousin sister and she finds ou

D-its located in southall right

T-southall?

D-its gonna be in Southall right

T-down Brent rd.

D-yeah down Brent rd and its a neighbourhood

K-brent rd?

T-no, Regina rd

D-Brent rd yeah

T-no, make it Regina rd

D-whatever right

T-thats a popular rd

D-well put it there and theres gonna be two families one opposite each
other not next door to each other, thats gonna be really stupid

K-why not neighbours

D-no opposite each others gonna be better

T-no! no! make it next door

D-all right, next door to eachother, what channel are we gonna put it
on

K-bbc 1, school time

D-a school time programme a bit like Grange Hill innit?

yeah

T-No

D-it could be a bit like Eastenders innit like with Shameen and all
that lot

yeah

T-yeah but they really get involved, the parents find out innit?

yeah

t-and then both of them run away and you know the parents they're pinning it on each others saying youre to blame and youre to blame

D-yeah and then the girl starts to tart up, not tart up, dress up and the parents start to realise thats shes becoming interested in someone

A-she making herself pretty for someone

D-and then they start to find out

T-they find out from pauls cousin sister cos she doesnt really like mandeep..no pauls mother tells his cousin sister to spy on them

D-and the parents go that shes gonna get married off and she gets worried and she tells Paul

a-and then they decide to run away

T-and goes its a free world now

A-so they date eachother

D-no they cant date eachother

T-they go out with each other behind their parents backs and the english boys family, they dont really like

(all together)

asian people

they dont want him to go out with an indian girl

A-they want him to go out with an english girl

t-they think that Asian people get up to all sorts of things

A-yeah and the Asian girls parents think shes really straightforward that she doesnt do these kinds of things

mother = jasbir; father = Prem; girl = mandeep

mother = pauline; father = Ken ; boy = paul; cousin sister= sharon

T-her parents start to say to her if you dont keep yourself under control were gonna take you down india and all that...she tells paul lets run away at first he thinks its a really bad idea but later he goes yeah

a-because thats the only thing they can do

d-then both families have a conflict, an argument, finding out whos

right and all that
they're 18
they have a discussion, eventually they find the boy and girl and they discuss what's going to happen in the future and then they've got no choice but to get them married right because if they say no then they know that the girls only gonna keep running away innit?
a-then both families sit down and discuss what's happening and then they agree that he can marry the Asian girl
K-no! they haven't decided if they want to get married or not!
d-they start to realise that they're being too strict on the girl and so they tell her to do things like English girls
a-and they let her have her freedom
d-and they let her be free and not bring their old culture in
t-they're putting too much pressure on her
a-and they realise that if they put too much pressure on her that she might eat poison or something
k-no she won't go that far
d-so they stop being so strict on the girl and they let them date each other but when they grow up and they're more understanding and they're more sure they let them decide for themselves
a-they can you know have their own responsibilities
k-they're old enough to get married
a-yeah so the parents don't be too strict on them, they can go out with each other yeah, they let them date each other
t-when those two go away they discuss how they've reacted and everything a-and they realise that they've put too much pressure on the Asian girl, Mandeep and that they should give her more freedom, yeah and both of the families sit down and discuss
d-the Asian family decide that they've been too strict so they decide to talk it out with the English family and try to get things right
t-they try to pin it..you know they go on about all those things that happen to them
a-yeah in their history
d-yeah like in the olden times
a-how things happened to them innit they try to take it out on their kids as well

d-and they dont realise that now were living in a
a-yeah modern
d-modern society
yeah
d-and that a girl should be free to do anything as long as shes
t-not everything but ...the boy gets a flat and they live with each
other and see how it works
d-and the parents realise in the end that they can manage their lives
on their own
yeah that theyre responsible
d-because theyve grown up and they realise that theyve grown up
a-and they can take care of themselves as well
k-theyre middle, no we can put the girl in a high class, posh and
everything
d-no but theyre living in brent rd, we said brent rd
t-yeah you know how the houses are there sort of open
a-theyre good mannered and everything
d-theyve got a fair amount of money
t-its just that theyre a fair english family its just that the things
they hear about indian people
a-they think that all indians are like that you know burglary, murder
rapes
t-the english family is very snobbish
k-the asian family are nice and middle class but the english family
are ordinary, normal
d-normal garden, big garden, three bedrooms, reception room
a-through lounge, central heating, double glazing
k-the bedrooms got teenage stuff in it and its so sort of clean and
everything
t-not more clean just more posh,
d-hes a business man, he goes round countries bringing back ornaments
a-and leather sofa, wallpaper plain
t-video
d-both families are well off
k-no the asian familys better off.

FREEDOM AT LAST

The disruption and chaos that gossip can cause is crystalised in the final video production of this group of 16 year old female media students who were asked to produce the final scenes of an episode of a 'new' soap which they themselves were required to devise and it is worth examining in some detail since it provides a pertinent example of the way soap is perceived as a gossip.

In this case the generic conventions of the soap opera have provided a framework which has assisted this group of girls to channel such local and personal concerns and allowed them to work through some fears and anxieties in a creative way, combining the involvement necessary to act out the situation yet the security of knowing it is only fiction. This is the function that the viewing of soap operas can and does perform for some young people, especially girls. Through the processes of identification a viewer can put themselves in the shoes of another and vicariously experience what it could or would feel like to be in that same dilemma with the security of experiencing a resolution.

In the first planning session (transcribed above) only four of the eight girls were present so they decided on a basic plotline. Later they revised some of their ideas when the whole group was present.

In the first scenario all that is taboo becomes possible; dating, running away and living together without marriage. To have an Indian girl falling in love with a white boy; the ultimate taboo. Their perceptions of English people and the transformation that their parents undergo by association with white people is revealing.

It represents an escape fantasy, an escape into a world unmarred by parental constraint as evidenced in the title 'It's a Free World Now!...'. The highly stereotypical nature of the tale should not blind us to the underlying trauma that SOME girls experience about marriage. It may well be that it is marriage and not the manner of its arrangement that is ultimately what is feared. The anxiety associated with marriage and or the possibility of marriage failure is possibly intensely felt especially when early marriage is often promoted for girls like these who are unlikely to go on to higher education .

Secondly, the scenario is a kind of charter, almost a plea to parents to loosen up a little, to let their daughters take responsibilities for their actions, to allow them to make decisions which affect them; in other words to manage their lives and to stop comparing the hard times they had with the ease their offspring now have. Several of the girls in the group were at the time dating boys and felt anxious about being discovered, guilty about deception and frustrated by parental constraints on 'going out'. But such protests should not obscure the latent equivocalness in attitudes to parents for that would conceal the dilemma of of many 16 year olds. Conflict with parents revolves centrally around the tensions between one's dependence on parents and the striving for independence; between wanting to be responsible and lack of responsibility; between sexual desire and the impossibility or fear of fulfillment. It is these tensions which are explored in 'FREEDOM AT LAST'

But these are tensions which every adolescent has to come to terms with so what is culturally specific to this particular group of girls? Most teenagers at some stage or another resent the rules that parents lay down for them . The sikh girls who devised this play are no different except that they objectify a notion of parental 'culture' and into it, like an empty vessal, pour all that they feel is negative about it. But the term culture is used in such a complex and at times ambiguous manner combining its positive as well as its negative charge. As a 'thing' to be proud of, to value and respect as well as a 'thing' to despise. Young people in Southall have to negotiate both their transition from teenager to young adult as well as the culture of their parents and that of their peers which of course overlap to varying degrees but also contradict eachother. The conflicts and tensions that ensue have been channelled into and explored through this prodcuton

In working through their ideas there emerges a clear pattern of associations; the parent's 'old' culture is set in opposition to modern society; the parents culture is Indian and restrictive and modern society is English and liberal. English boys are free to do what they like but Indian girls are not. But in the first scenario the girl's parents are transformed by talking the problem through with the English family. The English family by implication are also transformed. At the start they are seen as fair minded but they believe the stories they hear about Indians i.e. that they are burglars, thieves and socialise in gangs . After socialising they have first hand direct experience and they agree to the marriage.

The narrative resolution in the first involves the transformation and reconciliation of both families. The moral of the story based on inference would seem to me to suggest that life for young people in Southall is made difficult by the concentration of family and friendship networks in a small area. The intensity of social relations is exacerbated by proximity which in turn leads to a greater degree of mutual social control than Asians, living in more dispersed circumstances , would experience. If English and Asian parents were to socialise more they would not believe gossip, rumour, scandal about eachother but would through first hand experience of eachother develop and transform eacother for the better.

FREEDOM AT LAST (script taken from video production which was improvised)

THE GIRL'S FAMILY

KAMILA - mother
RUBY - eldest daughter
AMARJIT - the youngest daughter

KULJIT - the aunty

THE BOY'S FAMILY

DALJIT - mother
DILJIT -son

Scene One: the girl's family's living room.

Kamila - Ruby open the door. Who is it?

Ruby - it's aunty

Kuljit - Hallo, how are you?

Kamila - Hello sister, I'm fine, how are you? sit down. Ruby make two cups of tea

Kuljit - it doesnt matter, i've just had some

Kamila - it'll only take two minutes, Ruby make two cups

Kuljit - so how are you?

Kamila - i'm fine and how are you?

Kuljit - how's Ruby?

Kamila - Ruby's fine she works very hard

Kuljit - I haven't seen Amerjeet how is she?

Kamila - Oh shes gone to school

Kuljit - I want to tell you something and as you know i've never told any lies in my life

Kamila - oh yes i know that. Well, what is it?

Kuljit - When i was shopping i saw Amarjeet with a boy

Kamila - yes it was probably a class mate

Kuljit - no i don't think so as they were both holding hands

Kamila - holding hands no! you're lying

Kuljit - no, no it's the truth

Kamila - look my daughter is not like that, allright!

Kuljit - well, i thought i should tell you

Kamila - there's no need for the tea, take it back

Kuljit - well i'm going now

Kamila - you come to my house and tell me that my daughter is like that, she doesn't do that. Both my daughters are clever, they do their work and you say that she walks around with boys.

Kuljit - well i saw her and i thought i should tell you

Kamila - no, you're lying, my daughter can't do this

Kuljit - O.K. i'm going

Kamila - go!

(KULJIT EXITS)

Kamila - Ruby, can i talk to you, for a start turn that music down. Did you hear what your aunty was saying?

Ruby - yeah, i heard

Kamila - do you believe that?

Ruby - i don't know

Kamila - oh my God! my own daughter is going out with someone, she told that..

Ruby - how do you know?she could be lying, you know what that woman's like

Kamila - i don't know, you tell me

Ruby - i don't know nothing so don't come asking me

Kamila - Ruby, i know you know everything O.K.

Ruby - no, i don't know nothing

Kamila - Ruby you know everything, i know, look i can read your face like a book

Ruby - you know we don't get on so how's she meant to tell me

Kamila - Ruby, you know so please tell me!

Ruby - look i don't know nothing so let me do my work

Kamila - tell me please, what's going on?

Ruby - ask her what are you asking me for?

Kamila - how am i going to show my face to the world? you're close to her

Ruby - no! you know we're not we're always fighting

Kamila - you know it, just wait till she comes home, i'll sort her out

(AMERJEET AND FRIEND COME IN THE FRONT DOOR UNAWARE THAT HER MOTHER IS THERE)

Amerjeet - we've never got along with her! how come she decides to come round now, you know what she's trying to do!

Kamila - look she's my friend O.K. i believe her alright! she's like a sister to me, she tells me everything, she's not lying, she's not like that... i bet you go to the library ...go to the library and go out with boys, that's what i vcall study!

Amerjeet - mum i do, you don't understand

Kamila - what do i want to understand?i don't want to understand nothing O.K. oh God!. Just wait till your father comes home, when he finds out he's going to have a bloody heart attack..i just don't believe this anymore i don't know...

Amerjeet - why don't you believe me you know i'm not like that!

Kamila - you don't go to the library you go to see boys! you say mum i'm going to the library, mum i'm going to schoolto study what study do you do? you study with boys don't you?

Amerjeet - but believe me i'm your daughter. who are you going to believe?

Kamila - Just wait till your father gets home, how am i going to show my face to the world? you're sitting quietly now! aren't you going to say anything? I feel like slapping you, look at you sitting down quietly..you've really shamed me up you know that? it's shame for me just wait till you father gets home, it's really shame it is !...don't look at me like that i'm supposed to be your mother..why are you so quiet? you've got nothing to say have you? nothing ! you've got nothing to say bitch! you're a bitch innit! bad name to my family! don't know why you were born in the first place!well haven't you got nothing to say? why are you so quiet? you're happy going out with a boy aren't you? bitch, silly cow!

Amerjeet - mum! please! don'T!

Kamila - No! i'm going to hit her you bitch i hate you and you keep out of it

(SHE SLAPS AMARJEET AND THEN FAINTS)

SCENE TWO

Ruby - look what you've done now are you pleased with yourself?

Amerjeet - what have i done?

Ruby - what do you mean what have i done?

Amerjeet - you don't unbderstand, she doesn't listen to me

Amerjeet - Come in! don't worry there's no-one at home

(THEY ENTER THE LIVING ROOM)

Amerjeet - hi Ruby! mum! what are you doing at home?

Kamila - why can't i ever sit at home? what have you got on you lips?

Ruby - you're in trouble

Kamila - (to Amarjeet's friend) can you go home now please

Friend - what's up?

Kamila - just go home O.K.

Friend - O.K. Amar see you tomorrow!

Kamila - No! you can't see her tomorrow, she's not going to school from now on O.K. alright. bye.

Friend - Amar, will you be all right?

(FRIEND EXITS)

Kamila - Right young lady i want to talk to you O.K.
How come you've been coming home so late this week as well? you've been late all this week, bloody hell! late all this week who the hell do you think you are? you think i don't know nothing! i'm your mum O.K. I know it! doing things behind my back, you wear lipstick to school! tell me, who have you been seeing? tell me which boy is it?

Amerjeet - no one, who said i was seeing anyone

Kamila - look i just know O.K. you're going out with a boy, that's all i know right! you're going out with a boy and you do things behind my back. Look at your sister! she's doing her work! why can't you do some? stay home do your work, you have to!

Amerjeet - i do

Kamila - look i just don't believe you anymore, you're a little slut, you do things behind my back, i don't trust you anymore, i'm not going to let you out anymore

Amerjeet - but mum, listen to me

Kamila - no! i'm not going to listen to you

Amerjeet - O.K. who said? who said that i was seeing a boy?

Kamila - your aunty comend and tells me that you're seeing a boy, she saw you in the street holding hands

Amerjeet - i didn't want it this way, i wanted to tell them some other way

Ruby - look it's been a year yeah, look what you've done to mum and dad!

Amerjeet - look i love him and i want to marry him

Ruby - well tell that to mum innit.

SCENE THREE: in the library with Kam

Amerjeet - look Kam i don't know how to say this but remember that time i thought that my aunty saw us well she did and now she's gone and ruined everything. She came round to my mum's house and told her

Kam - what that one in the blue suit was your aunty

Amerjeet - yeah and now she's gone and ruined everything

Kam - what did your mum say?

Amerjeet - what didn't she say?

Kam - well there's only one thing we can do Amerjeet that is to get both our mums to see each other, i'll just have to tell my mum

Amerjeet - suppose she disapproves then what?

Kam - my mum or your mum there's nothing they can do cos we want to be together, they can't do nothing about it, we'll just see what happens, i'll call them round your house, i'll tell my mum everything tonight if it's that serious and they'll sort it out alright?

Amerjeet - yeah

SCENE FOUR (Kamila in sitting room ruby brings a lady in)

Ruby - mum this is Kam's mum, i forgot to tell you

Kamila - you haven't told me anything about this!

Ruby - yeah Amerjeet arranged for her to come

Kamila - oh my God! will you call that girl! i want to know what's going on! go and get her! right tell me what do you want to discuss?

Daljit - i've come to tell you that i think it's best if we sort this out you know my son likes your daughter

Kamila - i don't want to hear nothing, i just want Amar to stay at home right, i want to get her married off, i don't want her to stay with Kam O.K. i hate that boy he has influenced my daughter. that's all i can say

Daljit -you know and i know that they like each other

Ruby - oh yeah! tell me then! you reckon she's dreaming that she saw you with this guy, hey tell me!

Amerjeet - none of you understand do you? she came round just to get mum vexed and angry

Ruby - what are you trying to say, that she's lying?

Amerjeet - no, i'm not saying that, i didn't say that she was lying

Ruby - so what are you trying to say that you were walking with this boy? hey you're getting me in trouble for this

Amerjeet - what do you want me to do just sit and let them get me married to whoever they want?

Ruby - so tell me then who is the guy? does he go to your school?

Amerjeet - you don't know him

Ruby - yeah but just tell me where does he live? does he go to your school?

Amerjeet - look it's someone from school right

Ruby - yeah but what's his name?

Amerjeet - Kam

Ruby - how old is he? is he same year as you?

Amerjeet - yeah

Ruby - how long have you been going out with him for?

Amerjeet - a year

Ruby - and you haven't told anyone?

Amerjeet - i knew what you were going to say

Ruby - i weren't going to say anything! come of it! if i knew you could tell mum

Amerjeet - and do you think she's going to agree?

Ruby - no, but don't you think you should have told her in the first place? what religion is he?

Amerjeet - Sikh same as us

Ruby - you could have told her look what you've done to them now! they had to find out from that nosy cow!

Kamila - i'm sorry, i just don't believe this kind of love stuff, i just sorry right!

(RUBY RUSHES INTO THE ROOM)

Ruby - mum they've gone, i just saw them leaving

Kamila - who's gone?

Ruby - Amarjeet and kam

Kamila - oh my God! (faints)

Daljit rushes to feel her pulse

The following extracts are taken from the student's production logs which were done after it was produced.

POST SCRIPT ON THE FINAL VERSION

"We wanted the soap to be based on a conflict between two families...the majority of us were in favour of a conflict between two Asian families because we are more aware of many of the problems that their teenage children face.

Basically we really told a story of ourselves and what it is like for us at home because of the lack of freedom. We portrayed Asian families as they are true to life. We achieved this by making the characters very strong, especially the mother. You can see that she gets on well with neighbours and with her eldest but not her youngest daughter. She seems to be modern in the way that she can speak English but at the same time she keeps many of her traditional customs" (Amarjit)

We really wanted to target a teenage audience because we thought if we showed problems similar to their own it would stop them isolating themselves away from other people and help them face up to their problems. we also wanted to target parents because we want them to understand how teenagers feel and behave" (Amarjeet)

"The girl's family consists of a mother and her two teenage daughters. The father is away. Their mother is a little old fashioned - not conforming to British values -she's quite strict. (Kuldip)

The eldest daughter is intelligent and is interested in music and studying. She has a good relationship with her sister - on a certain level. (Amarjit)

The youngest sister is the rebel who goes against her parents wishes behind their back" (Ruby)

"the whole story is based on how Asian families object to falling in love especially if it concerns their own children"
(Ruby)

"The story itself is about two teenagers who love each other. The aunty, who is very nosy sees the girl holding hands and talking to this boy in the street and she feels it is her duty to tell the girl's mother about this" (Kuldip)

"Conflict arises because the girl wants to marry the boy she loves. The boy's family is willing to compromise and accept the situation however the girl's mother disagrees with this. The issue of family loyalty then arises.

The boy and girl meet in the library and she tells him what has happened. The boy comes to the decision that he'll have to tell his mother about their relationship and that they want to get married.

The boy's mother goes to visit the girl's and tries to persuade her that they should marry. The girl's mother doesn't believe in love marriages and refuses. The eldest daughter then announces that they have run away together. The mother faints but as the boy's mother goes to check her pulse we realise that she is still alive" (Amarjit)